Daily Report

Central Eurasia

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Russia: Chernomyrdin Holds Conference on Chechnya Outlook

LD2703182996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1628 GMT 27 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 27 (Interfax) — Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin held a conference in Moscow Wednesday with defense and law enforcement chiefs in Chechnya to discuss the outlook for a settlement there. Defense and interior ministers, heads of the Federal Security Service and the Federal Border Guard Service and Russian Security Council secretary Oleg Lobov are reported to have attended the conference.

The conference analyzed the evaluation of the military and political situation in Chechnya given by Defense Minister Pavel Grachev, who visited Groznyy, the Chechen capital, on Monday and Tuesday.

The peace plan adopted at the last Russian Security Council meeting was discussed in the light of the latest developments there. The key provisions of the plan are to be announced by the president on March 31.

Russia: Grachev, Internal Troops Commander on Chechnya Settlement

MM2803114196 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 28 Mar 96 p 1

[Unattributed feature on the war in Chechnya comprising three-paragraph unattributed introduction and unattributed, undated accounts of statements by Russian Federation Defense Minister Army General Pavel Grachev and by Russian Federation Deputy Internal Affairs Minister and Internal Troops Commander Lieutenant General Anatoliy Shkirko: "The Military Will Do What Is Laid Down in the President's Plan. Boris Yeltsin Intends To Promulgate a Program To Settle the Chechen Crisis 31 March. Military Chiefs Have Their Say on the Situation in Chechnya Today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the opinion of political experts, the head of state's statement on Chechnya will be the cornerstone of his election campaign. According to sociologists, Chechnya is the number one problem worrying society today. The continuing combat operations supply the opposition's main argument against the president.

Federal troops have recently been carrying out large-scale combat operations to eliminate Dudayev's main military formations and bases. According to ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI's information, the federal troops are opposed today by around 6,000 to 7,000 well-armed fighters. In the south of Chechnya alone Dudayev's men have seven tanks, around 10 infantry fighting vehicle, and up to 10 heavy mortars. Powerful defensive installations have been established in the population centers where Dudayev's men are concentrated.

A special operation to wipe out Dudayev fighters is being carried out in Groznyy, which the gunmen entered in the guise of civilians and where they continue to engage in sabotage.

Russian Federation Defense Minister Army General Pavel Grachev

Combat operations in Chechnya will end. This will become possible immediately after the Russian president's announcement of a plan to settle the conflict in the republic.

He noted that the operation to wipe out bandit formations in Chechnya is proceeding successfully on the whole. According to the defense minister, a distinguishing feature of the actions is the fact that prior to military operations the military offer the inhabitants of population centers peaceful ways out of the situation. And wherever commonsense prevails the matter ends with the signing of tripartite agreements on peace and accord. But wherever gunmen continue to carry out armed raids and acts of terrorism, strikes are made against them.

Pavel Grachev reported that the development of the peace talks process in the republic is the chief provision of the president's program to settle the Chechen crisis. The process of settling the conflict situation in Chechnya will not be accelerated by military operations alone, he stressed. And he advocated more socioeconomic and financial aid to Doku Zavgayev's government.

"As the Russian president has promised, the phased withdrawal from Chechnya of military units and subunits not involved in carrying out special operations will start in April," Pavel Grachev said. [Grachev account ends]

Russian Federation Deputy Internal Affairs Minister Lieutenant General Anatoliy Shkirko, commander of the Russian Federation Ministry of Internal Affairs Internal Troops

Special operations to destroy the bandit groups in Chechnya will continue after the withdrawal of troops. There is scarcely any point in hoping that peace will come to the republic in the immediate future or that Dudayev's men will start surrendering their weapons on a large scale. The bandit raids, robberies, and acts of terrorism in Chechnya will continue for a long while yet. The plan to settle the crisis makes provision for antiterrorist measures against Dudayev's gunmen to be stepped up.

According to Anatoliy Shkirko, Chechen terrorism is unparalleled in the world in terms of its scale and savagery. He reminded people that the internal troops had seized the following weapons in Chechnya since 11 December 1994: 1,978 small arms, 87 field guns, 631 mortars and grenade throwers, 135 self-propelled artillery pieces, 225 armored vehicles, more than 1 million rounds of ammunition, 35,000 artillery shells, 6,106 grenades, 5,612 mines and explosive devices, and more than 4,000 kg of explosives.

Dudayev's men pose a threat to the whole North Caucasus region. If its security and the integrity of the whole of Russia are to be guaranteed, the Dudayev regime must be eliminated once and for all.

Russia: Interior Troops General Speaks on Fighting in Chechnya

LD2703164896 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1100 GMT 27 Mar 96

[Report over video by unidentified correspondent on news conference given by Lieutenant General Shkirko of the Interior Troops, including recorded segments of Shkirko remarks — from the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] This year in Russia we are marking the Day of Interior Troops for the first time. However at a meeting with journalists today, the command of the interior troops spoke more about the hard days of service.

[Correspondent] At a news conference today devoted to the Day of Interior Troops, Lieutenant General Shkirko was not concerned with celebrations. He spoke about the plans and tasks of his department involving, as he said, the restoration of constitutional order in the Chechen republic.

[Shkirko] Fighting with gang formations will continue. They must be cut off. They must be cut off. They must either be disarmed and brought to account as law demands, or destroyed.

[Correspondent] The Russian military are still comparing the Chechen detachments with gangs in major Russian cities. But our troops do not bear such big losses from these gangs. After all, what is involved here is an armed conflict with the use of the air force, heavy artillery, and armored vehicles.

[Shkirko] During the operation in Samashki the interior troops lost 16 men killed. That is during the whole of the time of the operation. These are big losses.

[Correspondent] Shkirko said he would rather have a peaceful solution to this conflict. But it seems, the commander has learned a great deal from the experience of his predecessor, Anatoliy Romanov.

[Shkirko] Yes, Anatoliy Aleksandrovich held talks. He invested a lot of work and energy with a view to turning the conflict in the direction of a practicable solution. To some extent he has succeeded. To some extent. But broadly speaking, not a single provision of 30 July has been fulfilled.

[Correspondent] As for strategic issues, Anatoliy Shkirko confined himself to general statements.

[Shkirko] I cannot say anything ahead of the president's statement. Let us wait. Let us wait.

Russia: Chechen Parties Attend Peace Conference

LD2703133496 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1100 GMT 27 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The conference Peace to the Caucasus was held in the Gekhi-Chu village, Urus-Martanovskiy District, today. Yuriy Arkhipov, our special correspondent in Chechnya, reports.

[Arkhipov] The conference was convened by the interregional movement People's Diplomacy for Peace and Accord. It was attended by representatives of more than 15 Chechen political parties and public movements, as well as by members of the parliament of the Confederation of the Peoples of the Caucasus and the Chechen Republic's parliament.

The conference saw its main task in stopping the bloodshed in Chechnya and containing the conflict to prevent military operations from spilling over into the neighboring republics and the entire northern Caucasus. To achieve this goal, they intend to step up their activities within the framework of people's diplomacy and set up special peacemaking groups which will stage various actions against hostilities throughout the northern Caucasus. The conference adopted an appeal to all the peoples of the Caucasus to support this initiative and to start this work as soon as possible.

All political parties and public movements agreed to nominate Yusup Soslambekov, chairman of the parliament of the Chechen Republic, to the post of president of the Confederation of the Peoples of the Caucasus. The conference believed that this will make it much easier to solve the Chechen conflict, and there will be a realistic possibility to prevent it spreading throughout the northern Caucasus.

Russia: Dudayev Attacks 'Peace Deals' Between Villagers, Russians

AU2803080096 Paris AFP in English 0612 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Urus-Martan, Russia, March 28 (AFP) — Chechen separatist leader Dzhokar Dudayev slammed the peace deals that numerous villages in Chechnya have been signing under pressure from Russian forces.

In a statement broadcast by the rebels' television service late Wednesday, Dudayev said the accords "only serve as a pretext for the Russians to attack the villages."

Under the agreements, the Russians promise security to individual villages if they pledge to exclude separatist fighters and cooperate with the pro-Moscow authorities.

Otherwise the villages are attacked and occupied, often after being destroyed by Russian bombardments.

Dudayev said, "With these accords, they can at any time cause a provocation, say the village has violated the village and attack, and there will be no one left to defend it."

He said he had no hope of an early end to the 15-month-old war as he had no confidence in the Russians who invaded to quash Dudayev's rebellion in December 1994.

Russia: Federal Forces 'Advancing' Toward Dudayev's Main Bases

LD2703175296 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 27 Mar 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Half an hour ago we received a report that federal forces, having destroyed fighters' strongholds in Nozhay-Yurtovskiy district, have started advancing toward Dudayev's main bases in the mountainous Vedenskiy district in the direction of the villages of Vedeno and Dargo.

Commander Kvashnin of the North Caucasus Military District told Itar-Tass that if the fighters do not voluntarily leave that district the toughest measures will be used against them.

Fire is currently being directed only at places where fighters are known to be based.

Russia: Security Forces Act To Expand Chechen Demilitarized Zones

LD2703140996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1347 GMT 27 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 27 (Itar-Tass) — Large-scale combat operations will be completed in Chechnya before March 31 but in the event of armed provocations by rebels the federal forces "will be there for launch specialised local operations," federal force commander Vyacheslav Tikhomirov told Itar-Tass by telephone.

General Tikhomirov told Itar-Tass that "the main task for the troops now is to create a basis for the peace process."

He declared that the military intended to act in conjunction with Chechnya's legitimate authorities to help expand demilitarised zones and develop inter-Chechen dialogue in the republic.

On Wednesday afternoon, the leadership of the Chechen Republic and representatives of the federal force command held a conference in Groznyy to discuss a prompt end to forcible actions and the beginning of the peace process.

The conference was attended by acting chairman of the Chechen government Sanaki Arbiyev and commander of the North Caucasus military district Anatoliy Kvashnin.

Arbiyev did not disclose any details of the conference but noted that "the parties discussed in a positive spirit specific ways of preventing escalation of fighting."

Vice-Premier of the Chechen government Unadi Usamov told Itar-Tass that he favoured the expansion of the number of participants in the negotiations on the expansion of peace zones in Chechnya. According to him, "field commanders who disagree with Dudayev's policy of continued bloodshed" should be involved in the negotiating process which is being conducted by authorities, local inhabitants and the military.

Meanwhile, the federal forces continued their armed operation designed to "wipe out" the rebels in mountainous southeastern Chechnya bordering on the Republic of Daghestan. The rebel bases near the villages of Gilyany, Zandak and Bulgat-Irzu in the Nozhay-Yurt district southeast of Groznyy were pounded by artillery, and all approaches to the villages of Dovletbi and Shovkhad-Berd neighbouring on the district centre of Nozhay-Yurt were blocked.

Tension had considerably abated by Wednesday in Chechnya's southern Urus-Martan district where fed-

eral troops had blocked and shelled the villages of Alkhazurovo, Goyskoye and Komsomolskoye. As the rebels began to withdraw from the area, the troops entered Alkhazurovo on Wednesday.

Inhabitants of the villages of Goyskoye and Komsomolskoye are expected to hand in all weapons soon. If these villages sign memorandum of peace, the total number of villages which have proclaimed sovereignty will reach 123. Chechnya has 366 villages.

The operation in Samashki is moving to an end after the security forces entered it today to defuse numerous mines planted by rebels in residential quarters. Military sources told Itar-Tass that peaceful civilians would soon be allowed to return to the areas swept clean of land mines.

According to Ruslan Martagov, the spokesman for the head of the republic, Chechen authorities expect the tension to ease considerably across the republic in the next three days ahead of the Russian President's announcement of his plan for the Chechen settlement, which rules out large-scale military operations.

The international community regards the Chechen settlement as Russia's domestic affair, U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali declared at a press conference in Beijing today.

The United Nations will provide humanitarian aid to the region through international organisations only if the Russian government gives a go-ahead, Itar-Tass correspondent Grigoriy Arslanov reported from the Chinese capital today.

Russia: Abkhazia Blockade Cuts Supplies to Chechen Rebels

LD2803151096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1310 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, Mar 28 (Interfax) — The blockade of Abkhazia's sea borders by Russian border guards has resulted in shortage of ammunition in the detachments of separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev's fighters who received military cargo from Abkhazia by transit, a representative of the federal troops command told Interfax Thursday.

Border guards have also barred the channel through which ammunition and arms were supplied from Azerbaijan to Dagestan and then to Chechnya, he said.

A successful development of the operation waged by the federal forces in all directions has sharpened disagreements among Dudayev's forces between mercenaries and "the unreconcilables," on the one hand, and home guards on the other hand, the source said.

"The latter see that the peace agreements bring positive results and they fulfill orders of Dudayev's headquarters "to stand till the very end" with great unwillingness," he said.

Dudayev's fighters are changing their tactics under the strikes of the federal forces. Dudayev's headquarters is planning several terroristic and subversive acts to distract attention of the federal forces from their detachments encircled in the populated centers in Chechnya's west and southeast.

Russia: Dudayev Militants Possess 'Mini Oil Refineries' in Chechnya

LD2703143296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1254 GMT 27 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, March 27 (Interfax) — Militants under Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev have several dozen mini oil refineries in the south of Chechnya, a source in the Russian power department told Interfax Wednesday.

"Twenty to thirty oil trucks are daily crossing Dagestan to Russia to sell petroleum products. The proceeds are used to buy arms and food for gunmen and pay to mercenaries," he said.

"The gunmen have had serious financial problems. Their leaders have considered confiscation of valuables from local residents to continue the 'holy war,'" said the official.

Several days ago a federal unit destroyed an oil well in the Nozhay-Yurt region, the east of Chechnya. The well belonged to head of the Dudayev general staff Aslan Maskhadov. "Some 15 gunmen protecting the well were destroyed in the operation," said the source.

Russia: Dudayevite Forces' Tactics in Chechnya Viewed

MM2703115096 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 26 Mar 96 p 3

[Report by Vladimir Gavrilenko and Anatoliy Stasovskiy: "What Is the Bamut 'Werewolf'? Dudayevite Bandit Formations in Western Chechnya Put Up Serious Opposition"]

[FBIS Translated Text] For a few weeks in a row the main seats of tension in Chechnya have been the population centers of Samashki, Bamut, Orekhovo, Staryy Achkhoy, and neighboring areas. Combat operations have become clustered and the Dudayevites are trying to wage a subversive guerrilla war.

The gunmen are "switching" from one village to another and tension occurs depending on where they manage to penetrate: Sernovodsk, Bamut, Samashki, Staryy Achkhoy, and so on. Then it all happens over again for reasons known to them alone..... The Dudayevites operate in small groups, well equipped with arms, communications systems, and transport. They use corridors opened up by the federal forces for the civilian population, as well as unknown paths and roads through the fields, to escape from the blockaded population centers. And they carefully carry out reconnaissance.

In this situation the federal troops are of course trying to tighten the "noose" of encirclement around the Dudayevites' main bases still further in an attempt to plug all possible gaps in their formations. At the same time talks are also under way regarding the conclusion of agreements on peace and accord with population centers' administrations. According to our stringer Lieutenant Colonel Vasiliy Panchenkov, a protocol (a tripartite agreement between official Groznyy, the federal troops, and the local administration) on peace and accord was signed in the village of Katyr-Yurt 24 March. Preliminary accords have also been reached with the administrations in the population centers of Zandak, Gilyany, and Baydarki.

By all accounts ultimatums are still available for those who do not like such means of settling the conflict. At any rate, over the last few days the command of the federal troops has issued tough warnings to the administrations in the villages of Roshki-Chu, Alkhazurovo, Komsomolskoye, and Gekhi-Chu that the guerrillas there should lay down their arms.

If we assess the Dudayevite formations' potential in western and southwestern Chechnya, we do not think that it has yet been exhausted. Defensive engineering structures are still being put up in a number of population centers despite the blockade. There are also places where there is no need to build anything specially. This primarily applies to the former military camp and launch site of a Strategic Rocket Forces division 2 km from Bamut. Little information about this facility is filtering through. However, it seems to merit closer attention. I am primarily talking about the equipment at the division's launch site. It was built in the early sixties. The main components are as follows: four launch silos six stories deep and 6 meters in dizmeter, with a command center for the duty shift in the middle, three stories underground. Each silo is linked to the command center by underground tunnels. There are emergency underground exits from the facility. The command center does not appear above ground, it is well camouflaged and securely protected by thick ferroconcrete covers. Like the silos, it has no fear of bombing or shelling. The command center can quite easily house around a company of men. If necessary they can stay there for a fairly long time, living independently of the outside world. We will not say that all the command center's equipment is in good working order since the division was taken off the Strategic Rocket Forces strength back in the late seventies or early eighties. Nevertheless there is every reason to assume that the Dudayevites are using the installation as one of their main bases and a powerful, inaccessible, military installation. What is more, the guerrillas' positions around Bamut and the missilemen's former camp are protected on the plain side, according to our information, by checkpoints made out of concrete slabs taken from the stretch of road leading to the division's former launch site. As we can see, this does indeed represent a tough nut. It is quite possible that "cleaning it out" will be difficult and may take time.

CIS: NATO Expansion Threat Gives 'Boost' to CIS Integration

LD2803150196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1359 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 28 (Interfax) — The defense ministers of the former Soviet republics see the expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to the east as threatening, Army General Viktor Samsonov, who heads the Commonwealth of Independent States committee for the coordination of military moves, told journalists Thursday.

Summing up the results of Wednesday's session of the CIS Defense Ministers' Council, Samsonov said the possibility of NATO expansion had given a boost to military integration within the framework of the CIS.

The chief of the general staff of the Russian armed forces, Army General Mikhail Kolesnikov, will chair a new body, the joint chiefs of staff of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Samsonov said in a bid to prove that military integration was underway.

The CIS states should have outlined joint strategies in reponse to NATO's plans to expand to the east but their defense ministers will do this at their next meeting, Samsonov said.

The CIS defense ministers failed to reach agreement on the mandate of the collective peacekeeping force in the zone of the Abkhaz conflict because Russia's Foreign Ministry felt the Georgian vision of peacekeeping operations in Abkhazia contradicted international law, Samsonov said. Contrary to the statements made by Tbilisi, the Russian Foreign Ministry feels the right to use force rests exclusively with the U.N. Security Council.

In addition, those who attended the session turned down the Georgian demand for the exclusion of Sukhumi from efforts to draw up a resolution on peacekeeping action in Abkhazia.

The defense ministers decided to take further action in a bid to upgrade the joint air defense system. The member-nations of the joint system reached an agreement on customs policies and the funding and placement of production orders, Samsonov said. Azerbaijan and Moldova prefer to remain outside the joint air defense system.

All of the CIS republics, except Moldova, Armenia and Uzbekistan, were represented by their defense ministers. Moldova failed to attend the session, while Armenia and Uzbekistan were represented by general staff officers.

CIS: Grachev Faults NATO Eastward Expansion, Urges Coordination

LD2703185896 Moscow NTV in Russian 1600 GMT 27 Mar 96

[From the "Segodnya" program by announcer Mikhail Osokin]

[FBIS Translated Text] The theme of relations with NATO arose in Moscow again today at the meeting of CIS defense ministers.

The representative of Russia, Defense Minister Pavel Grachev, spoke harshly about the eastward expansion of NATO.

The CIS defense ministers discussed in Moscow today the problems of cooperation between their departments. The main question was the creation of a unified air defense system. That seems so far to be the military integration project nearest to implementation. That is why special attention was devoted to it and why air defense commanders were nervous. They said joint combat duty on the territory of Russia and Belarus began from 1 April; Kazakhstan would join it in May and Georgia from June.

The meeting on 29 March between the presidents of Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan gave the defense ministers of these countries a reason to talk about the principles of joint security, which other CIS countries may join if the draft of it is adopted. In the opinion of Pavel Grachev, NATO's determination to take new members from eastern Europe into its ranks should drive them to this.

[begin Grachev recording] In my view, the intention of NATO to expand in Europe by taking in new members is today the most negative factor affecting the security of the Commonwealth. [end recording]

Having spoken to the NATO secretary general, Pavel Grachev concluded that Javier Solana, in asserting his views, is supported by the coordinated position of the members of the North Atlantic Alliance. The defense minister wished his CIS colleagues the same thing.

[begin Grachev recording] The time has evidently come for us to coordinate our positions until decisions are adopted on the main international problems. [end recording]

True, a bit later Grachev spoke about lagging behind NATO in certain respects.

[begin Grachev recording] A possible countermeasure is substantially expanded integration in the military sphere. Anything is possible. (?We shall proceed — echelon

back!) [Russian: My budem idti — nemnozhko ustupom nazad] [end recording]

Incidentally, it is possible that the words about "countermeasures" have been dictated by the same reasons politicians, as CIS executive secretary Ivan Korotchenya said, prefer to pass over in silence military-political and military integration, stressing economic integration, although he said the share of military cooperation of the CIS countries accounts for at least half of all contacts.

[begin Korotchenya recording] The military-industrial complex is a strong complex and it should be taken into account here. [end recording]

One gets the impression that the unification of the armed forces is not the most complex task in the process of integration of the CIS participants, despite the fact that the armed forces are an ordinary sign of any independent state.

CIS: Grachev's Remarks to CIS Defense Ministers Detailed

MM2803115496 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 28 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Vladimir Berezko: "Integration in Military Sphere Continues. Latest Session of CIS States' Council of Defense Ministers Showed This"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A routine session of the Commonwealth Council of Defense Ministers was held 27 March 1996 at the Staff for the Coordination of Military Cooperation Among the CIS Member States. The defense ministers of Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, and also representatives of the defense ministries of Armenia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Ukraine took part in it.

The session was opened by Russian Federation Defense Minister Army General Pavel Grachev. In his introductory speech he stressed that 1995 was a year of the activation of integration processes and noted that the leaders of the CIS states' military departments did considerable work last year in the sphere of ensuring the states' military security.

In particular, Army Gen. Pavel Grachev said, the heads of state adopted the Blueprint for Collective Security which we drafted and basic guidelines for deepening military cooperation and determined the procedure for implementing them. A joint air defense system is being successfully established, and military-technical cooperation is expanding.

This year, according to the minister, we are faced with much work aimed at fulfilling the instructions from the heads of state on creating the normative and legal basis for a collective security system. There will very shortly be a meeting between the presidents of Russia, Belarus, Kazaknstan, and Kyrgyzstan which may sign a package of documents directed toward further all-around rapprochement among the four states. It is essentially a question of moving on to a new stage of cooperation while preserving the sovereignty of each state. We expressed our intentions in the military sphere, Army Gen. Pavel Grachev said, in the draft agreement on principles for jointly ensuring regional security in the military sphere prepared in the Russian, Belarusian, and Kazakhstani Defense Ministries. It is planned to submit the draft to the presidents for examination.

The Russian defense minister described as the most substantial negative factor influencing the security of the Commonwealth the intention of the NATO bloc to expand its border in Europe by admitting new members. He noted that we see an alternative to expansion of the alliance in a policy determined by all-European rather than bloc interests.

In the minister's opinion, the closest attention should be paid to practical aspects of collective peacekeeping. We are capable of resolving this problem through joint efforts, he noted, on the understanding that conflicts on CIS territory pose a threat to all Commonwealth members.

Measures to ensure the creation and improvement of the joint air defense system were examined during the session of the Council of Defense Ministers. Questions of the CIS member states' Committee of Armed Forces Chiefs of Staff and of clarifying the mandate of the Collective Peacekeeping Forces in the zone of the conflict in Abkhazia were also examined. Aspects of the training of military and civilian personnel assigned to the Collective Peacekeeping Forces were discussed. The question of providing housing for servicemen, citizens discharged from military service, and members of their families in the CIS member states was examined.

Army Gen. Pavel Grachev answered journalists' questions. In particular, mention was made of Russia's position on the question of NATO's eastward expansion, the problems associated with the division of the Black Sea Fleet, and other topics.

CIS: Defense Ministers Agree on Joint Air Defense System

LD2803111296 Moscow 2x2 Television in Russian 1000 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The CIS defense ministers have reached an agreement to create a joint air defense system. This was reported today by Army General

Samsonov, chief of the headquarters for coordinating military cooperation. In addition, an agreement on providing housing for citizens discharged from military service and their families in the CIS countries and a number of other documents were signed.

CIS: Joint Air Defense Patrols With Belarus, Kazakhstan To Begin 1 Apr

LD2703144196 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1309 GMT 27 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A regular session of the Council of Defense Ministers of CIS member-states took place in Moscow today. The agenda may be summed up in one word: integration. Igor Minayev has the details:

[Minayev] [passage omitted] Military cooperation of CIS states has primarily resulted in the creation of a joint air defense system and in the organization of joint patrolling. General Sergey Sapegin, deputy chairman of the Coordination Committee for Air Defense of Commonwealth member-states, has this to say:

[begin Sapegin recording] Following the previous meeting of the Council of Defense Ministers in October, the council of heads of government has approved all the necessary documents; for the first time, the volume of financing of our system has been defined, and specific targets for 1996 have been set up in terms of the joint patrolling of air borders; we have coordinated training of all patrol crews which will accomplish this mission. On 1 April, we are due to begin joint patrolling with Belarus on the western border of the Commonwealth; on 1 May — on the southern border, together with Kazakhstan's Air Defense troops; and on 1 June, we will embark together with the Georgian Air Defense troops on joint protection of the border with Turkey. By the end of the year, we will involve other member-states and will complete this military task, which is of paramount importance to us. [end recording]

[Minayev] General Kastenka, commander of Belarusian Air Defense Troops, has elaborated on this at my request:

[begin Kastenka recording] We will begin joint patrolling on 1 April, and general normative documents covering all these issues have been issued. In my view, Russia and Belarus could have a single air defense system within the framework of these documents. If this process is successful, it could be developed further. There are precedents in the world: the United States and Canada, two different and fully independent states with their own constitutions, nevertheless have a single air defense system. One could talk about joint combat and operational training, joint personnel training, and joint deliveries of hardware and armaments. One could even see them under single command some time in the future. [end recording]

CIS: ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 28 Mar

LD2803063296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0616 GMT 28 Mar 96

["Press Review" — ITAR-TASS headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW March 28 (Itar-Tass) — Follows a review of Thursday's Moscow-based Russian newspapers dated March 28. The press continues to highlight the forthcoming presidential elections, the Chechen crisis, and the repayment of wage arrears.

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI on a prospective programme to settle the Chechnya crisis.

In view of Boris Yeltsin's forthcoming promulgation of a programme to settle the Chechnya crisis, the newspaper carries remarks about the situation in Chechnya by General of the Army Pavel Grachev, Russian Minister of Defence, and Lieutenant-General Anatoliy Shkirko, Commander of Russian Interior Ministry troops.

"Combat operations will be brought to an end. This will become possible immediately after the President of Russia announces a plan to settle the conflict in the republic," Grachev said.

At the same time, "special operations to smash bandit groups in Chechya will be continued after a withdrawal of troops, since peace is unlikely to set in in the republic soon," Shkirko said.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA frontpages an interview with Head of the Chechen Republic Doku Zavgayev about ways and methods to settle the Chechnya conflict.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA on a fund-raising drive to finalise the construction of naval ships.

The newspaper runs an article by Sergey Ptichkin. He reports that representatives of the "Tercentenary of the Russian Navy" Public Council have declared "the start of a fund-raising campaign to finalise the construction of ships for the Russian Navy and the naval forces of Russia's Federal Border Service". A precedent set in Russia 90 years ago made it possible to create the most powerful navy in those times, Ptichkin notes.

IZVESTIYA on the repayment of wage arrears.

The newspaper's correspondents have visited Kaluga Region to see on the spot how wage arrears are repaid for the personnel of the budget-supported sectors. Their reportage headlined "Rating cannot be boosted by such wages" lacks optimism.

People, who received the modest wage arrears, are not optimistic either. The workers are aware that all this is a game. "No one will change his or her attitude to Yeltsin or Zyuganov due to these repayments. It is clear to everyone: this will not change the overall financial system, and everything will revert to the old ways after June," the correspondents observe.

IZVESTIYA on Yuriy Gagarin's death mystery.

The 35th anniversary of the flight of the world's first cosmonaut is approaching. But the mystery of the death of Yuriy Gagarin, who crashed together with instructor-pilot Seryogin on March 28, 1968, has not been unraveled.

The newspaper's correspondent Sergey Leskov has analysed all existing versions of Gagarin's and Seryogin's death and has become convinced that one of the most veracious versions is the one which tells that Gagarin's plane got into the wake of a supersonic fighter plane, which happened to be in the area of the training flights for unknown reason, and fell into the spin. At one time experts did not begin to follow this lead, since a confirmation of that would signify that safety regulations were most flagrantly violated in Moscow skies and that there was lax supervision.

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA runs the results of the newspaper's journalistic inquiry which revealed facts of big financial frauds and abuses of office by former Tula police chief Nikolay Panarin, who is now a member of the State Duma, the Lower House of the Russian parliament.

Panarin is a member of the Power of the People faction and a member of the parliamentary Committee on Security. He advocates the earliest adoption of anti-corruption laws.

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA carries a report from the Moscow Blood Transfusion Centre. The newspaper draws the following sad conclusion: "to thousands of people in Russia, the selling of their own blood has become the main means of survival".

TRUD on the Chernobyl disaster aftermath.

The newspaper carries an article dedicated to the 10th annivesary of the Chernobyl nuclear power station breakdown. The article tells the story of the ruin of Svyatsk Village in Bryansk Region. Anatoliy Vorobev's notes full of bitterness make the reader acknowledge that "the tragedy still lingers on..."

PRAVDA runs a collective letter by journalists, who represent print and electronic media that adhere to various political orientations. The journalists come out in defence of Budennovsk police.

The Interior Ministry leadership, upon accusing Budenovsk police of "wrong actions" on the days when Chechen terrorists attacked the town, subjected them to an unprecedented persecution. The article is headlined "Budennovsk policemen discharged their duty with honour. But their honour has been trampled upon".

Russia: Yeltsin Calls Kuchma To Confirm Plans for Visit

LD2703165296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1644 GMT 27 Mar 96

[By Mikhail Melnik]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, March 27 (Itar-Tass) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin telephoned Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma on Wednesday to confirm that he plans to visit Ukraine as scheduled, on April 4- 5.

The press service of the Ukrainian president quoted Yeltsin as saying that presidential elections in Russia cannot hinder the visit which he sees as a step towards closer relations between the two countries.

At the same time, Kuchma's spokesman Dmitriy Markov said at a press briefing earlier today that Yeltsin's visit to Kiev may be postponed. "President Leonid Kuchma of Ukraine understands Boris Yeltsin's need to conduct an election campaign, and if the visit is postponed, the Ukrainian side will not be surprised," he said.

Russia: Ukrainian Source on Problems in Black Sea Fleet Talks

LD2703153196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1259 GMT 27 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, March 27 (Interfax-Ukraine) — Prime Ministers Victor Chernomyrdin of Russia and Yevhen Marchuk of Ukraine had a working meeting in the Russian capital Tuesday to negotiate an ultimate settlement of the Black Sea Fleet division problem. The sides have admitted that several issues still remain outstanding.

This was disclosed in an Interfax-Ukraine interview by a source among the Ukrainian delegation. The decision has been taken that the outstanding issues shall not be made public "in the interests of negotiating process".

Yevhen Marchuk has invited his Russian counterpart to go on a working visit to Kiev to ultimately resolve these questions, the source also disclosed. Such a meeting may be held even prior to President Yeltsin's visit to Ukraine, tentatively slated for April 4-5.

According to the source, the Premiers have agreed to proceed with the effort within the framework of the three draft agreements which have already been prepared. He listed among them the draft agreement on the legal status and terms for basing in the Ukrainian territory of the Russian Black Sea Fleet [BSF], on proportions for the BSF splitting, as well as on mutual settlements connected with sharing of the Black Sea Fleet of the former Soviet Union and stationing of the Russian fleet in Ukraine's territory.

"Ukraine underlined the need to sign all the three documents in a package," the IF-U interviewee said.

In his view, a "significant circumstance" having its impact on the course of negotiations is the fact that validity of the Yalta agreements on dual subordination of the Black Sea Fleet expired way back on December 31 last year.

"Thus, legal status of Black Sea Fleet units and divisions has been undetermined as of January 1, which is tantamount to the presence in the Ukrainian territory of foreign troops," he went on to say.

Since that issue has yet to be covered by Ukrainian legislature, on January 30 this year Ukraine's Foreign Ministry sent a note to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, carrying proposal that validity of Yalta agreements should be prolonged until June 30, 1996 "provided the three above mentioned agreements are signed and take effect by that date." No reply has come yet, the source said.

Actual recognition by the Russian side of the halt of dual control of the Black Sea Fleet is evidenced by the fact that Russian President Boris Yeltsin has unilaterally appointed the new BSF Commander.

According to the Ukrainian delegation source, the negotiations are to continue at the expert level soon under guidance of Russian and Ukrainian Vice-Premiers Aleksey Bolshakov and Vasyl Durdinets.

Russia: Lebed on NATO, Communists, Election

BR2703162396 Madrid ABC in Spanish 27 Mar 96 p 32

[Interview with Russian presidential candidate Aleksandr Lebed by Juan Cierco in Moscow; date not given: "Canceling the June Elections Would Lead to Civil War"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The hull of his ship has sustained a serious hit at the waterline. Despite that, the charismatic Russian general, Aleksandr Lebed, is drawing on all his military experience to try to stay afloat and not sink without a trace into the turbulent waters his country is going through nowadays. He is still a highly respected and admired soldier, both in the chaotic Russian Army and in the no less turbulent civil society. His opinions on the highly controversial enlargement of the Atlantic alliance to include the countries of Eastern Europe or on the bloody and interminable war in Chechnya are therefore worth hearing. The Duma is trying to revive the former USSR.

In the political arena, he barely recovered from the pitfalls of the legislative elections, in which his party failed to exceed the 5-percent mark. He saved his skin by being elected deputy for the uninominal constituency of Tula. After breaking with his most recent past and with the party led by Yuriy Skokov, he decided to embark alone on the election adventure in June, despite the fact that the polls give him just 5 percent of the vote.

[Cierco] Why is NATO's enlargement unacceptable?

[Lebed] The reason behind NATO's enlargement to include Eastern Europe is becoming clearer every day: the fear felt by the Western countries — and especially the United States — of Russia's disintegration. In the past, there were two systems. On one side there was the Atlantic Alliance, on the other the Warsaw Pact. For better or for worse, at least that system was balanced. Of course, world stability was based on force, but at least there was stability.

Then the Warsaw Pact disappeared and NATO was left without an enemy. Yet, when Western leaders look us in the eye they still see the enemy, although in the past five years Russia has not demonstrated any violent tendencies, nor has it sought to reestablish any empire.

[Cierco] What steps could Russia take if enlargement goes ahead?

[Lebed] If NATO now stretches to the Russian border then that will encourage the creation of other blocs. Two states — Belarus and Kazakhstan — are prepared to take a determined stance alongside Russia. If the NATO enlargement goes ahead, we will have no other solution but to renounce the international agreements that we have signed in recent years. The missiles, and above all, nuclear deterrence would once again play a leading role. The Soviet conscience still borne by many of our citizens leaves no room for doubt. They wonder "who is responsible for our disintegration?" China? No. The Islamic world? No. Who then? The West. These same people wonder whether the West did not resign itself to driving us into poverty, or to turning us into beggars.

[Cierco] What is your opinion of the recent visit by NATO Secretary General Javier Solana?

[Lebed] Most of the things which Mr. Solana claims are not very right. In addition, the NATO secretary general chose the completely wrong time to visit Moscow. Whatever the decision that could be made, it will be frozen until after the presidential elections in June. In any case, what we must try to do is to ensure that tension does not grow, but statements inspired by electoral motives do not help this. Later, with a new president in the Kremlin, efforts will have to be made to ensure that Europe does not end up with a fresh military division. But you must know one thing: You do not scare us.

[Cierco] What is your view of the Duma's effort to revive the former Soviet Union?

[Lebed] The decision was somewhat populist. The Duma did not ask anyone if that was what they wanted. Instead of facilitating trade, customs, cultural, and economic relations between the republics of the former USSR, and instead of working from a realistic — as opposed to a utopian — standpoint, the Duma preferred to use a hammer to crack a nut.

Moreover, two-thirds of the presidents of these states which are now independent reacted negatively to the Duma's resolution. The remaining third has kept quiet. In any case, the Duma's determination will not have any legal impact, but it will have a political impact. The president already has an excuse up his sleeve to thwart the elections and stay in power. The Communists have made it very easy. We have to look toward the future. What is dead is dead. Bringing the dead back alive is pointless.

[Cierco] So one could call the Communists' attitude provocative?

[Lebed] Undoubtedly. In fact it seems that the Communists' only aim has been to provoke. They want to look like victims and gain more political capital among public opinion as the saviors of the chaotic situation that will loom if the Kremlin were to cancel the elections. In fact, we would end up on the verge of civil war.

[Cierco] Are you going to run for president?

[Lebed] I have already decided to run. To date I have managed to collect more than 800,000 signatures supporting me and I hope to obtain 2,000,000. [Russian law requires 1,000,000 signatures for a citizen to run for president.]

[Cierco] Do you think that the war in Chechnya can be resolved in the short term?

[Lebed] Chechnya has turned into a sore on Russia's body; a sore created by the authorities in Moscow. Who dissolved the Supreme Soviet? Who left arms in Chechnya? Who withdrew its Army from Chechnya? During a certain period, the instability in Chechnya was very profitable to certain people, especially where their finances and the laundering of their money earned under the table was concerned. Now, with the war, they are doing the same thing. The resources to be used to rebuild Chechnya never make it to their destination. Someone diverts them along the way. Chechnya is rife with drug-smuggling and arms-dealing.

[Cierco] So particular interests dictate the events in Chechnya?

[Lebed] Of course! We cannot escape from the situation until we unmask those who are guilty, and here I am not referring only to Dudayev. He has a direct influence on many senior officials in the Russian administration. He has a very firm grip on them and he has the documents to prove it in Swiss banks. The reasons for this war are primarily economic, then political, and finally military. If the money is cut off in Moscow then the tree of war will whither instantly.

The only thing we can do is elect a new president in June and dismiss the entire government. In the meantime, however, soldiers who are not fighting for Russia's interests but for the interests of its leaders, will continue to die. Sadly they are merely loose change in the enormous business deal that the Chechnyan war has become.

Russia: Foreign Ministry Says U.S. Chicken Imports No Problem

LD2803120296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1009 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 28 (Interfax) — Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman Grigoriy Karasin is surprised by attempts to play up the problem of U.S. poultry exports to Russia.

"The problem has been settled. No use playing it up," Karasin told Interfax.

Sanitary inspections carried out by the Russian veterinarian service early this year revealed that a number of chicken farms and refrigerators in the United States disregarded the provisions of the existing quality control agreement, Karasin said.

The U.S. side sees the Russian accusations as unbiased and agreed Monday [25 March] to meet the Russian demands for quality control, Karasin said.

The U.S. government offered guarantees to respect the quality control agreement. U.S. farms that are the likeliest to meet the Russian demands will continue to sell chicken meat to Russia, Karasin told Interfax.

Russia: Duma Delegation Urges Closer Military Ties With Taiwan

LD2703125396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1215 GMT 27 Mar 96

[By Ivan Novikov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 27 (Itar-Tass) — Closer ties between Russia and Taiwan in the military field are not only possible but also necessary, a delegation from the State Duma committee for geopolitical matters concluded after an official visit to Taiwan in March.

Committee chairman Aleksey Mitrofanov told a press conference here today that the recent Chinese exercises off Taiwan had not been directed against Taiwan.

"Those exercises were viewed with equanimity in Taiwan where the desire for unification with mainland China is quite strong," Mitrofanov said in summing up the results of the delegation's trip to Taiwan.

Mitrofanov stressed that "for the first time the Chinese People's Republic counterposed itself as a super-power to the United States, telling the Americans not to approach Taiwan with its aircraft carriers."

The Duma Committee leader said the numerous meetings and conversations with Taiwanese officials left the Russian parliamentarians with an impression that the Taipei ruling party regarded peaceful unification with the Chinese People's Republic as its aim in the perspective.

In these circumstances Russia should act as China's strategic partner, Mitrofanov said.

The delegation from the State Duma Committee for geopolitical matters arrived at a conclusion that the opening of a Russian mission in Taipei would meet Russia's national interests. A decision on opening the Russian office in Taiwan was made in Moscow in 1992.

"This move would do no harm to relations between Russia and mainland China but would undoubtedly help develop comprehensive contacts, including primarily in the economic sphere with China's island part," Mitrofanov said.

Russia: Minister on Nuclear Security Summit, Iran Relations

LD2703164096 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1417 GMT 27 Mar 96

[By Andrey Surzhansky]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 27 (Itar-Tass) — The nuclear security summit to be held in Moscow on April 19-20 with the participation of the leaders of seven industrialised countries, will be "an event of huge importance for Russia," Russian Minister for Nuclear Energy Viktor Mikhaylov said in an exclusive interview with Itar-Tass here on Wednesday.

This forum will demonstrate recognition of Moscow's great contribution to the development of the nuclear power industry all over the world, he added.

According to the minister, it is especially important that summiteers will centre on such an aspect as nuclear security, which "determines the future of the nuclear power industry".

This is connected, in a broader aspect, with such issues as safety of operating nuclear plants, utilisation of nuclear waste, concerted efforts of leading countries in the development of nuclear energy in the 21st century and joint projects on nuclear reactors of future generations.

Utilisation of nuclear materials received as a result of dismantling nuclear weapons is another aspect which will be discussed by forum participants. "This is an extremely important question for Russia," Mikhailov stressed.

The minister pointed to a contract with the United States (as a positive example of cooperation in this sphere) to utilise enriched uranium which is delivered to American stations as fuel.

In the minister's opinion, this contract gives a chance to Russia to settle many problems connected with safety of its own nuclear plants, especially of the first generation, with rehabilitation of territories polluted as a result of operation of nuclear plants as well as with maintenance of Russian fundamental and applied sciences.

Besides, the minister noted, the summit will consider non-proliferation of nuclear technologies and illegal trade in nuclear materials.

Mikhaylov expressed conviction that there should not be any competition in insuring nuclear security. "We should come to broad cooperation from confrontation, since nuclear energy is the future of mankind," he added.

"Whether we want this or not, it has become a world factor: 430 nuclear reactors operate in the world," the minister stressed.

Speaking of cooperation in the nuclear sphere between Russia and such countries as Iran (which provokes concern in the United States), Mikhaylov stressed that "the Russian side observes all international rules and norms."

He did not preclude a chance at the same time that this issue will be raised, nevertheless, at the bilateral summit between Russia and the U.S. In this connection, Mikhaylov suggested that a Russian-American nuclear commission on tariffs and trade should be set up. It will tackle all outstanding issues.

Turning to organisational preparations for the forum, the minister noted that the Russian president issued a decree setting up a coordination council to be chaired by Oleg Lobov, secretary of the powerful Russian Security Council.

The government issued an instruction establishing an interdepartmental working group which is headed by the nuclear energy minister.

According to Mikhaylov, preparations have been virtually completed for the summit: a draft report of the Russian president is ready, as are reference working materials on all Russian nuclear plants, their safety and on cooperation between Russia, on the one hand, the U.S., Japan, the European Union and Canada, on the other.

"All these documents have been submitted for the president's consideration," Mikhaylov noted.

Russia: Bolshakov Stresses Economic Cooperation With Iran

LD2703202396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1932 GMT 27 Mar 96

[By Lyudmila Glazovskaya]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ASHGABAT, March 27 (Itar-Tass) - Russia and Iran will step up joint efforts to implement a number of tripartite projects with Turkmenistan, including those in the development of Turkmen oil fields, Aleksey Bolshakov, Russia's vice-premier, said on Wednesday.

Bolshakov currently on a visit to Ashgabat, discussed the contracts in the oil and gas industry, transport and communications with Iran's Ambassador to Turkmenistan Mehtemir Talibi.

The Russian and Iranian officials gathered at a special meeting which had been promoted by Turkmenistan's president, Saparmurad Niyazov.

Russia and Iran display interest in making the best use of the railway between Iran and Turkmenistan to develop two-way trade and provide transit to other countries.

Bolshakov confirmed Russia's intention to send a delegation of high-ranking Russian officials to attend the ceremony to commission the railway in mid May.

Russia's vice-premier stated that the recent visit to Moscow of Iran's Minister of Foreign Affairs had given a fresh impetus to the progressing Russian-Iranian relations.

It was also stated at the meeting that the legal status of the Caspian Sea should be decided on as soon as possible.

The status is expected to create a basis for rational use of biological resources of the Sea and guarantee free merchant shipping for all Caspian states.

Russia: Foreign Ministry Reaffirms Wish To Widen Ties With Libya

LD2703194196 Tripoli JANA in English 1802 GMT 27 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, Al Rabia 27 [27 Mar 96], JAMAHIRIYAH News Agency — Grigoriy Karasin the Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman yesterday reaffirmed Russia's determination to widen its relations with the Great Jamahiriyah.

In a statement quoted by the Russian news agency 'INTERFAX' Grigoriy Karasin emphasised the positive stances of the Great Jamahiriyah towards the so-called Lockerbie case and called for the need to respond to these positive stances and to lift the unfair sanctions.

Russia: Large-Scale Economic Cooperation To Be Resumed With Libya

LD2803121796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1009 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 28 (Interfax) — Russia will very soon resume large-scale economic cooperation with Libya, Russian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Economic Relations Oleg Davydov said Wednesday night in an exclusive interview with Interfax. Davydov was speaking at Sheremetyevo-2 airport in Moscow on his return from Tripoli, where he held talks with Libyan leaders.

The two countries will launch immediate action on large-scale joint ventures worth a total of $10 billion to $11 billion, Davydov said.

Davydov spoke of plans to lay railroads, build thermal power plants, put up electricity lines, repair gas pipelines and upgrade industrial facilities built with aid from Russia on Libyan territory.

Libya will pay hard currency for the delivery and installation of appropriate machinery, Davydov said.

The West ignores the U.N. Security Council sanctions against Libya and is busy promoting economic cooperation with that country but Russia allowed its own relations with Libya to be reduced to nil. This is what prompted the decision to revive business contacts with Tripoli, Davydov said.

Russia will no longer cede positions in the Libyan marketplace and is prepared to help Libya boost its economic potential, Davydov said. He recalled the 40-year record of Russian-Libyan cooperation.

Davydov and the Libyan leaders focused on the $2 billion that Libya owes Russia and found a framework formula for squaring the debt. Libya will start paying off the debt as soon as it improves its financial position but, the issue will come under further scrutiny next month in Moscow, Davydov said. The Security Council decision to toughen the anti-Libyan sanctions dealt a serious blow to Libyan finances back in 1994.

Davydov transmitted a letter from President Yeltsin to Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi. Without revealing the contents of that letter, Davydov said Yeltsin sees the need for breaking the stalemate in relations with Libya.

Russia: Chernomyrdin Holds Talks With Swedish Foreign Minister

LD2703204196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1905 GMT 27 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 27 (Interfax) — Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and Swedish Foreign Minister Lena Hjelm-Wallen, who is on a working visit to Russia, Wednesday discussed Chernomyrdin's forthcoming visit to Sweden, scheduled for May 2-4, Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Krylov, who attended the talks, told Interfax.

Chernomyrdin expressed the hope that the visit will help to improve bilateral political relations and solve numerous urgent issues at the meeting of Baltic prime ministers, Krylov said.

Following the dramatic rise in bilateral trade in 1993-94, the turnover between the two countries fell by 11 percent in 1995 to nearly $1,200 million, Chernomyrdin said.

Chernomyrdin is reported to have said that this decrease, resulting chiefly from the decline of Russian exports to Sweden, worries the Russian government.

During his stay in Sweden, Chernomyrdin will have numerous meetings with Swedish businessmen and try to attract Swedish investments to Russia.

Russia: Russian, Polish Interior Ministers View Current Problems

LD2703192796 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1420 GMT 27 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Zbigniew Siemiatkowski, internal affairs minister of the Republic of Poland, arrived in Moscow on an official working visit today. Today also, after the talks, a joint news conference by the Polish guest and his colleague Army General Anatoliy Kulikov, Russia's internal affairs minister, took place:

[Begin Kulikov recording] Today we discussed a number of problems which are having a very serious effect on the crime situation in both countries. There are absolutely no contradictions at all between our departments

as we have one enemy, the criminal. Irrespective of his nationality and country of origin, we intend and are manifesting a very acute desire to detain the criminal. We discussed a number of problems in this area. They are connected with the mutual exchange of information, and with the exchange of a databank on the existence of such criminal groups and on the work of individual operational investigative groups for individual types of crime, for specific crimes. Moreover, we have had in existence [changes thought], in 1992 an agreement was signed about the interaction between our departments, and within the framework of this agreement we intend to step up this work.

There are problems. They are: the movement of motor transport, Russian citizens' safety on the territory of the Polish Republic, and also Polish citizens' safety on Russian territory. I can quote the following figures: Last year 667 Russian citizens were arrested for committing crimes — they were suspected of having committed crimes on Polish territory, including 38 thefts, 58 robberies, 64 cases of buying stolen goods, and other crimes. Some 700 crimes were perpetrated against Russian citizens in Poland. I believe that our meeting and the measures which we intend to take will be quite sufficient to resolve these problems. [end recording]

[Correspondent Anatoliy Federov] I asked the Polish internal affairs minister to comment on the fact that the so-called Chechen information center is operating in the republic's territory in Krakow. As was stated at the summit of heads of state in Egypt, this center represents Dudayev's terrorist regime. What is more, it is recruiting mercenaries for Chechnya.

[Begin Siemiatkowski recording, in Polish fading into Russian translation] The Chechen question is an internal affair for Russia. We are a democratic and open country, therefore the question of Polish citizens voicing sympathy and antipathy is their own business. The government is not empowered to compel people to change their views. The center operating in Krakow is a public initiative and is not subject to any pressure on the part of the state. A decentralized government exists in Poland where self-governing authorities operate, and if the Krakow authorities have given the go-ahead for the creation of the Chechen information center, that is the business of the Krakow mayor's office and the local authorities.

But I have already given my colleague Anatoliy Kulikov the assurance that in the case of Polish legislation being contravened, the culprits will be made anwerable to the law. If facts of terrorism appear, here, too our law will provide an adequate reply. [end recording].

Russia: Russian Pilots in Zaire Charged With Manslaughter

MM2703112896 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 26 Mar 96 pp 1, 3

[Report by Gennadiy Charodeyev and Andrey Piotrovskiy: "Russian Pilots Do Not Know Why Their Airplane Killed Hundreds of People in the Capital of Zaire"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Three members of the crew of a Russian An-32 transport aircraft, which exploded during takeoff in the center of the capital of Zaire two months ago, have been charged by the General Prosecutor's Office in Kinshasa with manslaughter which resulted in the deaths of 297 people, according to the International Red Cross. The crew members are alive, and are imprisoned in the local jail until the judicial sentence is made public.

Russian Ambassador to Zaire Yuriy Spirin reminded IZVESTIYA that, on 8 January, a heavily loaded An-32 which belonged to the "Moscow Air Lines" Company was unable to take off, and, having traveled down the runway at high speed, literally plowed through nearby city market. On crashing into a bus full of passengers and several cars, the aircraft burst into flames and then exploded. In the horror and panic which overwhelmed the salespeople and visitors at the market, dozens of women and children were crushed to death. According to various reports, about 1,000 Zairians were wounded or seriously maimed.

As the Russian pilots stated during the investigation, they did not manage to drag the dead body of flight engineer Andrey Belyayev out of the burning airplane. However, their statement is being deemed unverifiable. The official documents of the local Prosecutor's Office list Andrey Byelyaev as missing and the police is continuing to look for him.

Nikolay Khizhnyak, a representative of the Department of Air Transport, who is participating on the Russian side in the work of the commission investigating the causes of the disaster, reported that the "black boxes" from the An-32 have been found and taken to Moscow. Our experts have started decoding the information contained in them in the presence of representatives of Zaire and the International Civil Aviation Organization,. As N. Khizhnyak said, it was a miracle that the "black boxes" were intact. Because looters, as well as ordinary entrepreneurial Zairians, paying no attention to the chaos and fires, stole straight after the accident all the cargo on board and the remains of the airplane — right down to the last bolt, apart from the airplane engine. It was said that they could not find a crane.

The commission member did not comment on the preliminary official results of the investigation. Nevertheless, he is not ruling out the possibility that the aircraft might have been overloaded, for example, or that the cargo was incorrectly distributed along the length of the airplane, or that the technical condition of its engines was to blame. The crew may also have made some serious mistakes. Nikolay Khizhnyak has met with Captain Kazarin in prison. The pilot believes that he acted correctly, but could not explain why the airplane did not obey him.

Russian diplomats in Zaire are noting that, in accordance with the local laws, our pilots face the threat of imprisonment for a period of between two days and two years.

The Moscow Transportation Prosecutor's Office has instituted criminal proceedings against the Russian leasing company "Moscow Air Lines," which owned the An-32 airplane which crashed in Zaire at the beginning of January of this year with its crew of four Russians. This decision was adopted on the basis of the results of an official check of the activity of the airline, conducted by the Prosecutor's Office because of this disaster. [passage omitted]

Russia: Union With Belarus Corresponds With Duma Resolution

LD2703143896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1254 GMT 27 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 27 (Interfax) — Russian Duma deputy and leader of the People's Power deputy group Nikolay Ryzhkov said today that the idea of creating a Russia-Belarus union "fully corresponds to the spirit of the March 15 State Duma resolutions and can only be welcomed."

He is concerned, however, with the way in which Russian President Boris Yeltsin and his entourage have "emasculated" Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka's public declaration of the union agreement.

"It's utterly incomprehensible why we should find out about a decision of such monumental importance — the creation of a union between Russia and Belarus — from the mouth of Lukashenka," Ryzhkov said. "It would make more sense if the presidents of both governments simultaneously broadcast an extraordinary decision like this."

Russia: Moscow Talks on Karabakh Issue Continue

LD2703195896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1732 GMT 27 Mar 96

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 27 (Interfax) — Armenia and Azerbaijan continued their talks in Moscow on Wednesday in a bid to agree the future status of the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh.

"For the first time since the beginning of talks, this problem was discussed for the whole day," a source close to the talks told Interfax.

The source said the parties to the talks, sponsored by Russia and attended by Karabakh officials, confirmed their positions on the issue.

Azerbaijan wants its territorial integrity to be preserved and Karabakh to be granted the status of autonomy, while Karabakh and Armenia demand independence for the enclave.

At the same time, the source said "it is necessary to understand that it is impossible to reach agreement on such extreme positions."

On Tuesday, each party tried to find out what compromises its partners would be prepared to make in order to reach a consensus on the status of Nagorno-Karabakh.

"The discussion was a theoretical one," the source added.

The current round of talks, which is expected to end on Thursday, will be followed by two-day consultations involving the OSCE Minsk group on Nagorno-Karabakh.

Russia: Russia To Protest, Disregard Reallocation of Fish Quotas

MM2703165996 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 26 Mar 96 p 3

[Report by Vladimir Skosyrev: "We Will Continue To Catch the Same Quantity of Fish As We Have Always Caught. Russia and Poland Oppose Reallocation of Atlantic Fish Resources"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London — The battle for raw material resources is hotting up. Now the majority of members of the Northeast Atlantic Fishing Commission have decided to reallocate herring and sea perch reserves to the detriment of Russia. This is how Vyacheslav Zilanov, deputy chairman of the Russian Federation State Committee for Fishing, described the results of the commission's extraordinary session in London.

Although we are talking about fishing in a region extending from Norway in the east to Greenland in

the west outside the 200-mile economic zones of the littoral states, members of the European Union, and also Norway and Iceland, voted for Russia to have the right to fish not 50,000 tonnes, which is approximately equal to its annual catch, but just 36,000 tonnes. At the same time, the lion's share of the reallocated resources are to go to Greenland, which has virtually no fishing fleet of its own.

"We consider this approach unjustified. If Greenland is incapable of taking its quota, it will sell it to other states. In that case, the interests of Russia, which discovered these reserves and has carried out more than 40 scientific expeditions in the region of the Northeast Atlantic, would be harmed," Zilanov says.

[Skosyrev] Are the commission's decisions binding on member states?

[Zilanov] The decisions do not become binding at once but only after a certain period of time has elapsed. However, since Russia has objected to them and will register its position in writing, they will be inoperative for us.

[Skosyrev] What consequences stem from this for our fishermen?

[Zilanov] We will continue to fish within the limits of the scientific recommendations and our historically conditioned share.

[Skosyrev] Nevertheless, Russia finds itself isolated within the commission.

[Zilanov] No, we were not alone. Poland, like Russia, also objected to the reallocation of the ocean's resources in favor of the littoral states.

Political Issues

Russia: Yeltsin Addresses Congress of Education Heads

LD2803075796 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0716 GMT 28 Mar 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 28 Mar (Itar-Tass) — The purpose of my reelection for a second term is to ensure that people live better and see the fruits of the reforms, Russian President Boris Yeltsin said addressing the fourth congress of the Russian union of rectors of higher educational establishments today.

The head of state said that, since Russia's future depends to a great degree on the level of education of its citizens, "investments in the individual, his knowledge, culture, moral standards and health" are "one of the key points" of his election platform. The president stressed that ensuring that the state creates "conditions for developing the best human capacities and qualities" is "the essence of the reforms he is implementing and its human dimension."

Boris Yeltsin stressed the very important role that the intelligentsia would play in the current election campaign. "We have no right to lose the tough struggle for the hearts and minds of Russian electors," he added.

Russia: Yeltsin Criticizes Lecturers' Communist Ideology

LD2803095496 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0834 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 28 Mar (Itar-Tass) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin today spoke at the 4th Congress of the Russian union of rectors of higher educational establishments, criticizing some university lecturers.

The head of state said, "some social scientists have proved to be unprepared for democratic changes," "many have simply been defeated by hardships of today's life." However, Boris Yeltsin continued, he cannot agree to some lecturers "not wishing to change and to respond to new factors." In particular, the president believes, a social science lecturer "simply must not harken back to the past. He must understand that concentration camps, destruction of entire social classes and branches of culture, exile of the best minds and the devastation of the spirit were the cost of so-called stability."

Boris Yeltsin said that "some social science lecturers still actively espouse the ideology of parties with communist leanings." As the president said, taking advantage of the fact that lecturers and students live together on university campuses, communists "are trying to organize party groups apparently at places of residence, but in reality in actual universities." He stressed that "this is the violation of the ban on setting up party groups in enterprises and organizations." "Rectors of universities and colleges who allow and even encourage this creeping return to one party having ideological monopoly, will have to be brought to account as the law demands," the head of state warned.

Russia: Yeltsin To 'Unveil' Platform at Congress 6-7 Apr

MM2703202896 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 28 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Volodina: "Boris Yeltsin To Unveil Election Platform at Congress of His Supporters"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Boris Yeltsin's registration as a Russian Federation presidential candidate is expected at the beginning of April, since the law gives the Central Electoral Commission 10 days to verify signatures. ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI has learned from informed Kremlin sources that intensive work is under way to finalize the list of agents, of which a presidential candidate can have up to 200. Preparations for the congress of the Public Movement To Support B.N. Yeltsin in the Russian Federation Presidential Election are also being completed. It is scheduled for 6-7 April, and it is to these congress delegates that Yeltsin intends to unveil his election platform. Sergey Filatov, chairman of the movement's council, has announced that over 2,000 of the incumbent president's supporters delegated by the movement's regional branches will gather in Moscow.

Action group leaders claimed that the collection of signatures in support of Yeltsin has dispelled certain myths inhabiting the public consciousness. For example, that the president is supported mainly in the "capitals," while the regions are opposed to him. The very fact that Action Group No. 4, which has handed over pro-Yeltsin signatures to the Central Electoral Commission, collected them in 67 regions of the country speaks for itself. Enthusiasts from Action Group No. 26 (Tatyana Grozmani), which collected 1.9 million signatures, have been working in 73 regions. The Tyumen Action Group's (1.4 million signatures) signature collectors have been working in 77 regions, mainly in Siberia, the Urals, the Volga region, and the Far East. Yevgeniya Zavadovskaya's action group reached the remotest backwaters, simultaneously carrying out a cultural enlightenment mission. Enthusiasts in a number of Krasnodar Kray's southern rayons — in the most "Leninist" of areas — have worked tirelessly and successfully for Yeltsin.

The legend that currently signatures can be collected only if collectors are paid well (as is known, there is a going rate: Collectors usually receive 1,000-1,500 rubles for every signature) has also been disproved. Action group leaders unanimously claim that pro-Yeltsin signatures were collected by his genuine supporters, in the vast majority of cases on an unpaid basis. Filatov claims that these people are the backbone of campaign collectives. They have gained great experience, since the collection of signatures has by no means always gone smoothly — none of the organizers denies this. Signature collectors have had to carry out explanatory work, answer pointed questions, and listen to criticism of the head of state. The general opinion is that there are three particularly crucial questions which voters are waiting for the president to solve: the war in Chechnya, the problems regarding wage arrears, and the fight against crime and for the imposition of "order in the country." Of course, there were people who refused to give their signatures for Yeltsin, but most expressed their willingness to support the president if he clearly demonstrates his willingness and ability to solve these particular problems.

Russia: Filatov Holds Press Conference on Yeltsin's Campaign

MK2803120996 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by Sergey Mulin under the general headline: "Two More Presidential Candidates Will Appear Soon"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Thirty-five thousand collectors of signatures in support of Boris Yeltsin were pressed into service absolutely without pay by action groups in 67 regions around the country. The selflessness of the advocates of the incumbent president's election for a second term was confirmed to journalists in Moscow's town hall yesterday by Sergey Filatov. The chairman of the Council of the Coordination Committee of the All-Russia Public Support Movement said that his structure "did not set aside a penny" for the collectors of signatures and that many groups made this their principle.

Just to sound even more convincing, Vladimir Komchatov, head of Group No. 4 — which turned over signatures to the Central Electoral Commission [TsIK] the day before and which secured Yeltsin's consent to be nominated precisely by them — cited a specific example of Khabarovsk Kray. When the market of services spontaneously established a flat rate of 1,000 rubles per signature, the "Yelstinists" were even accused of stealing money from the collectors. However, the associates of the representative of the Russian Federation president in Moscow have proved to be principled opponents of turning the 16 June election "from a sociopolitical event into a commercial undertaking," because a vast majority of them have been Boris Nikolayevich [Yeltsin]'s supporters ever since the end of 1988, the elections for people's deputies of the USSR.

Sergey Filatov introduced to the press workers the heads of another seven action groups in support of Yeltsin's candidacy with some of them having collected even more signatures than the Komchatov group did. In particular, the Shumeyko group is ready to submit to the TsIK 1.9 million signatures, yet Boris Nikolayevich has remained true to his old comrades in arms. All those who could not secure the president's consent, were asked to merge "on a broad front" with Mr. Filatov's movement and take part in its congress, which will be scheduled at today's session of the Council for 6-7 April and will be attended during the two days by more than 2,000 delegates, heads of Russia's regions and representatives of the Russian Federation president in the provinces. Boris Yeltsin is expected to unveil his 1996 election platform at this congress.

Sergey Filatov, who has joined the recently created council for electing [Yeltsin] for a second term, is inspired by the fact that Yeltsin's "popularity and the rate of its growth are higher than those of his rivals" — he does not even rule out the victory of his candidate in the first round, that is to say, on 16 June.

At the same time, Filatov totally excluded the possibility of calling the presidential election off or moving its date because he knows Boris Nikolayevich's sharply negative reaction to a corresponding proposal in the Federation Council, in particular, during a conversation with Yegor Stroyev. Sergey Aleksandrovich [Filatov] warded off an attempt by those present to find out what is going to happen with the signatures collected at enterprises under compulsion and recommended to proceed from the resolution by the Central Electoral Commission with regard to complaints from the Ministry of Railroads: "No violations have been found."

Just as categorically Mr. Filatov dismissed Grigoriy Yavlinskiy's claims to the role of Russia's new democratic leader. In his words, the latter "has never stood at the helm of state affairs," for which reason Boris Yeltsin should be given an opportunity to bring reforms..." Not to the end — it takes too long to bring them to the end — but "to a logical conclusion." "The moment of truth" is expected to arrive by late April or early May, when chances of all the rivals will finally become clear, Sergey Filatov stated.

It looks like the [former] SEV [Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, or COMECON] high-rise building,

housing Moscow mayor offices, is going to be the center of attraction of all pro-president forces. The headquarters on Krasnopresnenskaya Naberezhnaya works like clockwork: As soon as time reserved for the news conference was up, Sergey Filatov wound up the press conference and hastily departed — an automobile pulled up at the entrance, Anatoliy Chubays emerged from it and marched by the journalists.

Russia: Yeltsin's Campaign Team, Tasks Detailed

MM2703160496 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 2

[Article by Lyubov Tsukanova: "The People Who Will Be Running Boris Yeltsin's Election Campaign"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The dissatisfaction felt by the Russian president's supporters at the progress of his election campaign has finally been allayed in appropriate fashion. Last week Boris Yeltsin announced that he himself would head up the election campaign, and on Saturday the president convened for the first time the coordinating council in charge of preparing and running his campaign. We have learned that the council comprises Viktor Chernomyrdin, prime minister and leader of the Russia Is Our Home movement; Viktor Ilyushin, head of the Presidential Aides Service; First Vice Premier Oleg Soskovets; Presidential Chief of Staff Nikolay Yegorov; Vice Premier Yuriy Yarov; Moscow Mayor Yuriy Luzhkov; Presidential Security Service Chief Aleksandr Korzhakov; Federal Security Service Chief Mikhail Barsukov; Sergey Filatov, leader of the Russia-wide movement of public support for Russia's first president; Igor Malashenko, president of the NTV television company; and Boris Yeltsin's daughter, Tatyana Dyachenko.

It has been announced that the council is to become the body developing election campaign strategy, a kind of "think tank" for all the efforts designed to secure a June election victory for the leader of the democratically minded public, whom a significant section of the electorate consider Boris Yeltsin to be.

The people who say that Boris Yeltsin's image does not need a "boost" are unlikely to be right. The normal human interest in the personality of the head of state has to be constantly satisfied. And it has to be honestly admitted that the paucity of information concerning Boris Yeltsin's actions during the period of preparation for the State Duma elections, his aloofness from the political associations which are his tactical and strategic allies, and the poor quality of the work done by the information and propaganda services weakened the democratic side and handed the opposition an information and emotional (which is particularly important in our conditions) victory. The loud echo of that win still resounds to this day: On the crest of its success in the parliamentary elections the CPRF has managed to rally a host of other smaller communist and patriotic tendencies around it, has successfully collected signatures for its leader, Gennadiy Zyuganov, and is already engaged in all-out election campaigning. And, although it is clear that the "unity of left-wing forces" is a temporary and contingent phenomenon, the Communist opposition must be given due credit here: It has been able to use all the opportunities afforded it by history to unite, to put forward a single leader, and to mobilize its voters to the maximum extent.

Nor can the successful way in which the opposition works with the mass media be ignored. While journalists often only manage to obtain information about the president's actions in dribs and drabs, Communist and nationalist leaders are eager to impart their ideas at the drop of a hat. And although the president is engaged in actual affairs of state, while the opposition merely criticizes them, Messrs. Zyuganov and Zhirinovskiy appear on the television screen almost more often than the president himself. Popularity is a hard taskmaster. The president must not drop out of the voters' sight for a single day if policy is to be constantly kept to the fore of public interest. The growth in Boris Yeltsin's ratings in recent weeks is the result, among other things, of the fact that his name is constantly mentioned on television and is never absent from the pages of the newspapers. It is clear that a well-conceived, energetic, hard-hitting information and campaign policy in the time remaining before 16 June could substantially increase Yeltsin's constituency by garnering the votes of those people who are loyal to the current authorities in principle but need the authorities to present a positive image and need to feel optimistic about the future and see confirmation of the correctness of the historical path embarked on by the country.

However, Sergey Belyayev, leader of the Russia Is Our Home faction in the Duma, was right when he said that a propaganda "boost" to Boris Yeltsin's image will not of itself be enough to secure his victory. The informed voter, particularly the voter of democratic, progressive convictions, expects and will continue to expect from the head of state that he first and foremost takes real steps to solve the very grave problems tormenting the country. Strictly speaking, those problems are three in number: Chechnya, late payment of wages, and duped investors. This is where the discontent with the ineffectual actions of the authorities, embodied by the president, is concentrated. Boris Nikolayevich and his team have shown by the example of rapprochement with Belarus how it is possible to make great progress in an

area important to the country if the strategy, tactics, and propaganda backup for their actions are clearly worked out. It is clear that it is more difficult to solve the "conundrum of Chechnya," but it is dangerous to delay the publication of the settlement plan or to hold back moves to overcome the tragic conflict there.

Russia workers find the material degradation they suffer when you cannot obtain your honestly earned money for months on end at least as difficult (if not most difficult of all) to bear. It is difficult to explain to these people that the president is not to blame for their woes. But Boris Yeltsin took a courageous step when he assumed personal responsibility for solving this very difficult task. The electoral success of that move will certainly depend to a large extent on the president's firmness and on the consistency and discipline of the executive axis of power, which includes keeping the public fully informed of what is being done in this area. But it is probably most important of all to ensure that the March clearance of arrears does not prove to be a one-shot action and that a start is made on organizing regular payments to workers and pensioners.

The majority of Russians are inclined to trust the authorities provided they can see that they are ready and able to act for the common good rather than their own self-serving ends. Confidence in the current president depends (waxing or waning accordingly) on the level of his activity as a national leader. I think his success in the June elections will be determined by this.

Five years ago, and time and time again since then at critical junctures, Boris Yeltsin has triumphed thanks to his powerful will, which has instilled confidence in his comrades-in-arms, supporters, and the masses of unpoliticized voters who give due credit to the leader's energy, vitality, and individuality. Today the president cannot afford to let himself or his team act as if they had no rivals. His rivals include not just the whole Communist and nationalist camp or even Boris Yeltsin of 1991 vintage, with whom he is constantly compared by the voters. No, his main rivals today are the serious economic, social, and political problems besetting the country plus the inertia of the bureaucrats, which often resembles sabotage. If continuity of power is to be preserved in the country and those who launched the reforms are to continue to pursue them the voters must be certain that President Yeltsin will be able to deal with all this.

Russia: Yeltsin Campaign Set To Cause 'Social Explosion' in Siberia

MM2803100896 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 28 Mar 96 p 5

["Own information" report: "Ahead of the Locomotive"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Certain particularly zealous Yeltsin supporters are trying to run ahead of the locomotive in the election struggle, and getting the corresponding results.

Aleksey Khvorov, leader of Yeltsin's supporters in Chita, recently told local journalists at a press conference that the Transbaykal Cossack Army has joined the movement of Russia-wide support for Yeltsin in the elections. The response was an official statement from the Army's leadership, saying, in part: "Every Cossack has the right to vote in the upcoming elections for any contender for the top post in the Russian leadership, in conformity with his political convictions and civic conscience." The Cossacks, the statement notes, greeted Khvorov's announcement with great perplexity, since the Transbaykal Cossack Army has not joined and does not intend to join any electoral blocs or movements.

A wave of protest greeted the first, as yet timid, attempts by Shumeyko's public movement "Reforms — New Course" to begin election campaigning for Yeltsin in the oilmen's city of Nefteyugansk. Local activists distributed about 200 pamphlets campaigning for the president's candidacy, and this exacerbated the social situation in the city. That is not surprising: Workers and employees at oil refineries have not received their wages for several months, are on enforced leave, and are living in fear of job cuts.

In the next few days a social explosion can be expected in another Siberian city — Nizhnevartovsk, where it is planned to cut 6,000 jobs on 1 April at the city's main enterprise — "Nizhnevartovskneftegaz." As everywhere, the cuts are due to the difficult financial situation at an enterprise once known throughout Siberia for its successes and for the social protection of the workers.

Today the inhabitants of this region directly associate their disastrous situation with the course of "reforms" for which Boris Yeltsin is standing as guarantor in his election campaign — although admittedly he is not yet registered as a presidential candidate. Say what you like, his campaigners and propagandists will have a hard time: How can people be persuaded to vote for the "guarantor"? It cannot be ruled out that the campaigning will act as the detonator of large-scale spontaneous demonstrations by the extremely embittered and hungry population of this bleak region.

Russia: Election Prospects for 'Third Force' Viewed

MK2803085096 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 3

[Report by Natalya Arkhangelskaya: "A Triumvirate Which Does Not Exist Yet"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On the day that the Duma adopted the well-known resolution on the "Belovezhskaya Forest issue" three deputies issued a statement calling on their colleagues to refrain from the dubious step. This was the first joint action by Aleksandr Lebed, Svyatoslav Fedorov, and Grigoriy Yavlinskiy, who are still trying to reach an agreement to act as a single bloc in the upcoming presidential elections.

In the December elections these leaders, at the head of their respective associations, did not get very much: 4.3 percent of the vote (Lebed and the Congress of Russian Communities), approximately 4 percent (Fedorov and the Party of People's Self-Government), and nearly 7 percent (Yavlinskiy and Yabloko). In principle a simple summing up of these results in June, when the number of contenders will, to all appearances, be fewer than in December (therefore there will be less "dilution" of the vote) could lead the triumvirate into the second round. Next it would be a technical matter because, according to the sociologists, at least two of the three (Yavlinskiy and Fedorov) have a chance of defeating Zyuganov in the second round. Yet things are not that simple.

In spite of the highly intense coalition activity, especially noticeable on the left flank (Zyuganov, for example, has already gathered approximately 50 leaders with their parties under his banners), it is well known that the electorates of various political blocs in Russia almost never lend themselves to automatic summation. In the event of Yavlinskiy, Fedorov, and Lebed, from the point of view of vote transfer, Yabloko's leadership would be optimal. According to sociologists, if the bloc is headed by Yavlinskiy, it will be able to attract up to 70 percent of the general's and the eye surgeon's supporters. If the bloc is led by Fedorov, it will be more difficult to merge the votes while Lebed's leadership appears the worse option from this point of view. The question is this: Can the aforementioned three leaders reach a balance of interests by shedding their personal ambitions?

Arguably, the greatest pragmatist among them is Fedorov. He does not miss a single political get-together, looking for an acceptable option. Fedorov took part in a meeting of democratic leaders under Sergey Filatov's umbrella; he also signed the well-known document on creating the "Third Force" election union and is reportedly not averse to contacts with Communists. Presumably Fedorov will easily cede leadership to another, if that person meets his essentially material interests. Lebed in this respect is a greater "political altruist." As the signature presentation date draws nearer, the general — who only two weeks ago stated that his ambitions are "higher than ministerial," while complaining that nobody is offering him posts higher than that of deputy premier — is becoming less categorical, indicating that he is ready to humble his pride in the face of a higher rating by another candidate. However the third and the most promising — but also the most ambitious — participant in a potential coalition maintains silence about his position on this account; as he does, incidentally, about the possibility of teaming up with somebody else. He is the main problem to the formation of the bloc.

Lebed and Fedorov have already announced their readiness to revise their election programs if common interests so require. It is not known, however, whether this will be deemed sufficient by Yavlinskiy who jealously guards his ideological purity. What sort of relationship will he eventually have with politicians, one of whom calls for creating a committee on natural resources to be headed by Solzhenitsyn in order to stop the "sellout of the Motherland" (Fedorov), while another proposes an unorthodox plan for repatriating Russian capital, which consists in granting an amnesty to all those who illegally exported this capital out of the country (Lebed)? Moreover, the election program of Yavlinskiy himself is still a closely guarded secret.

True, consultations continue. To all appearances, the distribution of roles will be more or less clear in mid-April, when the candidates who presented 1 million signatures to the Central Election Commission are to be registered. Evidently, some of them will fail to raise the required signatures, finding themselves in a vulnerable position with respect to those who will have cleared the barrier. Observers point out that Lebed's and Fedorov's positions are the most vulnerable today: Both are short on money and organization. So, Yavlinskiy can, as a result, become the leader and on the strength of the signatures raised start dictating his terms. Yabloko has already collected the requisite signatures, but the campaign was conducted unprofessionally — as it was in parliamentary elections — and the Central Election Commission can again spring a surprise. Yavlinskiy may be right in refraining from comment on the formation of the bloc. Life will show, as the saying goes.

Should the association not come off, all three can try join one of the two favorites: Yeltsin or Zyuganov. Fedorov is free to move either left or right. His microsurgery clinic is reportedly in financial difficulties, which could be alleviated by President Yeltsin. On the

other hand, the portfolio of the Duma Communist Party faction includes a draft law "On the Self-Governed People's Enterprise" the implementation of which is the eye surgeon's ultimate dream. Lebed's choice is not so rich. He does not believe "the number one Communist" and he is right: The man's inner circle has quite enough epaulets. Moreover, judging by some of the general's statements, he is fed up with Communism. True, neither the CPRF nor the presidential side today are in a hurry to issue promises to the "nonaligned," waiting to see what they will have to offer the Central Election Commission on 16 April.

Russia: Luzhkov To Run for Reelection as Moscow Mayor

LD2703150096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1254 GMT 27 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 27 (Interfax) — Moscow Mayor Yuriy Luzhkov said on Wednesday he will run for reelection for a second term.

The announcement was made at a meeting with the students and faculty members of the Gubkin State Oil and Gas Academy where Luzhkov studied about 40 years ago.

Luzhkov has repeatedly said, both in informal discussions and during official appearances on television, that he contemplated participating in mayoral elections slated for June 16, 1996.

At the same time, he told the academic audience that "this is practically the first time I am doing so publicly, looking in the eyes of Muscovites, so to speak, and fully realizing the responsibility of such a decision."

"If Muscovites trust you and think that you are doing your job properly, if they understand that mistakes in your work are caused by the complexity of the tasks and force-majeure circumstances, rather than malicious designs or incompetence, I would consider it my moral and professional duty to remain on this post in order to continue what we have begun and carry out new ideas prompted by the compelling needs of the city," Luzhkov said.

"We have already started so many important and complex projects that it would be immoral to stop half-way," he added.

Speaking about his political orientation, the mayor pointed out that "I am not a politician. I am an administrator. If I ever joined any party, it would have to be a pragmatic party which would be guided not by political, but by pragmatic considerations of individual and public benefits. But no such party has come to existence so far and therefore I am not with any party."

He stressed that the "main question of today" is "who will be the president of Russia for the next term?"

"We are electing not a specific individual, not a tendency of development and not even a course. We will be electing a political and economic system of the state for many years to come," he said.

Luzhkov noted that he sees "a tremendous creative potential in the system which is being formed" in Russia today. "That's why I support (incumbent President) Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin who will continue the reform we have started," he added.

Russia: Second Round of Presidential Elections Likely on 7 Jul

LD2703144396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1254 GMT 27 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 27 (Interfax) — The new Russian president is likely to be elected in July, according to Secretary of the Russian Central Electoral Commission Aleksandr Veshnyakov. He told Interfax Wednesday that if necessary the second round of presidential elections may be held on Sunday, July 7.

There will be a repeat vote if no single presidential candidate gains over 50 percent of votes first time round. "The second round will involve the two presidential candidates who gain the majority of votes," said Veshnyakov.

Experts believe this situation is likely to shape up after the elections on June 16. Recent public opinion polls show high ratings for two presidential candidates, Gennadiy Zyuganov and Boris Yeltsin, who are far ahead of their rivals. At the same time, neither of them is likely to gain 50 percent of votes in the first round of elections.

The results of June 16 elections will be summed up within a week, although this can be done within 15 days under the election law.

"The chances of electing the new Russian president in the first round are slim," said the commission secretary. He reminded Interfax that the law on presidential elections provides for repeated voting no later than 15 days after the elections results are announced. That is why the most probable dates for the second round are Sunday, July 7, or Sunday, July 14.

Russia: Agenda of Kyrgyz President's Visit to Russia Outlined

MM2703114296 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 7

[Report by Aleksandr Shinkin: "Integration By Precise Scientific Rules"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev began his first official visit to Russia yesterday.

To a certain extent he is breaking the usual canons of such events — Akayev traveled first not to Moscow but to the "northern" capital. In St. Petersburg he met with the governor of Leningrad Oblast and the city mayor, and visited a number of organizations including his alma mater — the Precision Mechanics Institute, where he once studied and taught.

Today Askar Akayev will be meeting with Russian President Boris Yeltsin, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, and other officials.

The aim of this visit, as set out by Askar Akayev on the eve of his arrival in Russia, is to take a new step down the road of developing comprehensive friendly relations between the two fraternal states.

This rather protocol-style phrase is backed by some pretty sizable experience of cooperation between the two countries. In the past five years more than 100 different documents have been concluded between Russia and Kyrgyzstan. For instance, 110 Russo-Kyrgyz joint ventures have been set up and are operating in Kyrgyzstan. All this, despite the difficulty with finacial settlements, has made it possible for Kyrgyzstan to increase its foreign trade turnover with Russia.

The conditions under which the Russian-speaking population in Kyrgyzstan has to live are changing too. Many of those who had left the country are going back. According to figures from the Kyrgyz National Statistical Committee, 37,300 people left the republic last year but around 19,000 arrived.

In Moscow Askar Akayev intends to sign more than 10 documents. These include a joint declaration on the expansion and deepening of Kyrgyz-Russian cooperation, agreements on a simplified procedure for Russian and Kyrgyz citizens to acquire citizenship of those countries and on the principles of cooperation in safeguarding the rights of ethnic minorities, and other documents relating to defense, the protection of borders, and the fight against drugs.

As expected, Askar Akayev will be signing an intergovernmental agreement on Kyrgyzstan's admission to the Customs Union with Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan — something for which the republic has actually long been prepared. Whether Askar Akayev is ready to follow his Belarusian colleague Alyaksandr Lukashenka in going further (to set up supranational organs) is not yet known. He himself prefers to be tactful and cautious about this subject.

Russia: Chernomyrdin: Industry Not Yet Stabilized

LD2803111896 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1000 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Russian Government today examined the question of progress in restructuring and of rendering the operation of industry more stable. Addressing the sitting, Viktor Chernomyrdin stated that the government needs to raise the share in GDP of taxes and revenues to the consolidated budget by at least 5 percent.

The center of gravity in state regulation is now shifting toward untangling nonpayments, raising the effectiveness of administering property, and establishing relations between industry and the banking sector and trade.

The prime minister stressed that despite the marked improvement of the situation regarding volumes of production of the most important kinds of output for the time being, we are still unable to say that the condition of industry has stabilized.

Russia: FSB Spokesman Addresses Rumors of Chechen Terrorism in Moscow

LD2703213796 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1900 GMT 27 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Information has started to appear in the mass media again that Chechen militants are likely to stage acts of terrorism in Moscow. In particular, the latest edition of IZVESTIYA refers to information by special services and says that Dudayev fighters have decided to violate the moratorium and stage a number of terrorist acts in Moscow. We contacted a spokesman of the Federal Security Service [FSB] for Moscow and Moscow Region Andrey Kostromin and asked him to tell us what measures his department is taking in this respect.

[begin Kostromin recording] Security services are doing their best to prevent any complications in Moscow in connection with the threat of terrorist acts. We are working. Our staffers are doing their best, they are checking all rumors. All more or less significant reports are being followed. We are working, we are doing our job. The main task of the security service is to find out if an act of terrorism is being prepared and to nip it in the bud. The fact that nothing has happened in Moscow so far does credit to the security service. [end recording]

Russia: Agrarian Groups' Statement Deplores Land Rights Edict

MM2803092096 Moscow SELSKAYA ZHIZN in Russian 26 Mar 96 p 1

[Statement by the Agrarian Party of Russia Central Council Board, Agrarian Union of Russia Presidium, and Agro-Industrial Complex Workers' Union Central Council Presidium, signed by M. Lapshin, chairman of the Agrarian Party of Russia; V. Starodubtsev, chairman of the Agrarian Union of Russia; and A. Davydov, chairman of the Agro-Industrial Complex Workers Union Central Committee on 22 March 1996]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Agrarian Party of Russia Board, Agrarian Union of Russia Presidium, and Agro-Industrial Complex Workers Union Central Committee state that the president, in signing the Edict "On the Realization of Citizens' Constitutional Rights to Land," has yet again grossly violated the Russian Federation Constitution. Under Article 36 of the Russian Federation Constitution "the terms and procedure governing the use of land are determined on the basis of a federal law."

The following fact invites attention. Knowing that the State Duma would be giving the "Land Code" its second reading in April 1996, the president hastened to forestall the law's adoption, intending through the edict to secure irreversible changes in land use and agricultural production.

The president's political and economic aims are obvious. Above all they are to win rural voters over to his side by bribing them with the latest carrot — land allotment. And furthermore to try to ruin collective farms once and for all on the eve of spring sowing.

The edict's implementation could seriously retard spring field work, in which case the food situation in the country will be exacerbated to catastrophic proportions in the fall.

In this crucial period we appeal to the Russian peasant and all rural inhabitants: Before you decide how to dispose of land, think carefully and weigh up all the possible consequences of this step.

The division of land, the allocation of a plot of land in kind without the consent of other participants in shared ownership, and the free buying and selling of land shares will inevitably give rise to a vast number of conflicts, divide rural inhabitants, and intensify social tension in the countryside.

We are also obliged to warn you that hopes of enrichment and a poverty-free life on the proceeds earned from the sale of land are a self-deception, an illusion, and a myth. Having lost your land, you will lose even the small amount of support you are now being given by collective farms. Few people will survive on their own. Because if the present time is anything to go by, money will slip through your fingers like water.

The Agrarian Party of Russia, Agrarian Union of Russia, and Agro-Industrial Complex Workers Union believe that agriculture's problems must be solved not by its continued disintegration but through a sensible financial and credit and tax policy, the elimination of price disparities, the stimulation of the development of all forms of management, and support for the countryside's social sphere.

The state must remember that the peasants are its backbone and the repository of the people's spiritual wealth. The Russian countryside is a provider and nobody is entitled to play with its fate irresponsibly.

[signed] M. Lapshin, chairman of the Agrarian Party of Russia

V. Starodubtsev, chairman of the Agrarian Union of Russia

A. Davydov, chairman of the Agro-Industrial Complex Workers' Union Central Committee

[dated] 22 March 1996

Russia: Lebed Interviewed on Personal Background, Other Issues

964F1558A Moscow SOBESEDNIK in Russian Mar 96 No 10, p 3

[Interview with Major General Aleksandr Ivanovich Lebed, former commander of the 14th Army, independent State Duma deputy, and presidential candidate, by Andrey Vandenko; place, date not given: "Aleksandr Lebed: The Quieter You Go, the Wider the Trap"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Vandenko] Aleksandr Ivanovich, did you ever think of changing your name to one that is more heroic and appropriate for a military man?

[Lebed] In what way is the name Grachev [rook] better than Lebed [swan]? What is more, Rus was at one time called the land of swans. The swan was a totem under which the sword was taken up more than once for the homeland. So, my name could not be more military. It is true that Pavel Bunich contrived to list me as a Jew. He wrote that my real name was Shvanner. For some reason it seems to me that this name is more German than Jewish, but I am not a specialist.

[Vandenko] Were there any Shvanners in your family?

[Lebedev] Look at my physiognomy first, then ask such questions. What kind of Shvanners? There were

Maksyukovs and Lebeds... Bunich simply is trying to persuade you that all names with a direct semantic meaning have a reverse translation into Jewish. I looked at myself for a long time in a mirror, trying to understand how much plastic surgery had to be done in order to completely hide my Jewish roots.

[Vandenko] By the way, concerning plastic surgery. I recall that an attempt was made on one television program to give advice on ennobling your appearance. In my opinion, you did not follow this recommendation.

[Lebed] I do not need such recommendations. A man should be a little more sympathetic than a monkey. This is enough.

[Vandenko] You persistently continue to be addressed as general, although you voluntarily left the service. Is this the practice?

[Lebed] There is no such thing as a former general. Anyone who thinks that something has changed since I took off my military jacket and put on a sweater is mistaken. No one will take away my rank, habits, and ability.

[Vandenko] If they start to call you a retiree, will you be offended?

[Lebed] If someone wants to, they can call me that as well.

[Vandenko] You do not like it?

[Lebed] When I do my morning exercises, I sometimes look in the mirror, and I convince myself: I am a retiree, I am a retiree!

[Vandenko] Does it sound plausible?

[Lebed] I understand very well that I have not exhausted the potential in me.

[Vandenko] Enlighten me: Is it possible to return to the active Army from retirement?

[Lebed] We now have a contract service; therefore, everything is possible. Look for a place for yourself, reach an agreement with the chief, and—forward march.

[Vandenko] But, after all, for a general the president is the chief, and is it true that his edict is required?

[Lebed] Of course, the good will of the state is necessary... I am 45 years old [illegible] according to the existing regulations, I can serve to 55, my physical condition is excellent, so that...

[Vandenko] What?

[Lebed] Under certain conditions I can return to the service.

[Vandenko] Explain these conditions.

[Lebed] There are only two: A new supreme commander and minister of defense. Until that happens, there is nothing for me in the Army. It is an army of lackeys.

[Vandenko] It seems that you were previously satisfied with your commanders.

[Lebed] Yes, I am grateful to Grachev for the school that he provided me—at that time he was a real officer, but today I cannot even find the literary epithets to be able to characterize this person.

[Vandenko] But do you always use only literary epithets?

[Lebed] A swear word is a powerful weapon that must be used in the right place.

[Vandenko] You refer to Pavel Grachev by his last name. Do you take this liberty only behind his back, or to his face also?

[Lebed] It is now acceptable in Russia to refer to the minister of defense this way.

[Vandenko] Do you address him in the familiar?

[Lebed] I always address everyone formally. First, this is polite. Second, it maintains a distance.

[Vandenko] If I am not mistaken, you devoted 26 years of your life to the Army.

[Lebed] Not simply devoted, I also achieved something in it. I commanded all echelons, from section to army, and I did not skip one rung of the ladder. I always did my best, and not for glory. I liked and like the officer's profession.

[Vandenko] But why did you give everything up; did you prefer a political career to a military career?

[Lebed] It was impossible to tolerate it any longer. Honor and dignity have gone out of the Army.

[Vandenko] Did you realize this only in your 27th year of service, but before this you reconciled yourself to the existing state of affairs?

[Lebed] I did not reconcile myself to anything. As long as there was hope, I remained in the Army.

[Vandenko] Does it not seem strange to you that hope died at exactly the same moment your rating as a politician climbed and on the horizon there loomed not only parliamentary but also presidential elections? Do you not find that an amazing coincidence?

[Lebed] I do not see a coincidence here. If you will recall, the first recoil against me was conducted in

August 1994, when there was still no question of either parliamentary or especially presidential elections.

[Vandenko] But at that time you did not submit a request.

[Lebed] I was able to defend both the administration and the 14th Army itself. But later... I did not want to be turned into a person responsible for an inventory of rusty machine guns. I am not fit to be a lackey, and I do not feel like an Aleksandr Matrosov who is ready at the command of the president to plug all holes. The image of a cat that likes to go it alone is more to my liking. I do not take sops on Mondays, or any other day of the week.

[Vandenko] But why did you turn down training in the General Staff Academy? It was a deserving recommendation. Of course, in the event you are interested in the career of a military man and not that of a politician.

[Lebed] In principle I am not anxious about any career...

[Vandenko] Nevertheless, you decided to take Moscow by storm after all?

[Lebed] I am a categorical opponent of any revolutions, I am fundamentally not a rebel. I know perfectly well that we will not survive a third war in one century. As it is, we do not have a country but a complete demographic absurdity.

[Vandenko] I wanted to ask about something else. Do you think that a direction can be changed so sharply—from an Army column to Duma chambers?

[Lebed] If changes cannot be made from the bottom, they have to be conducted from the top.

[Vandenko] That is, you are using an outflanking maneuver?

[Lebed] Why outflanking? This is a real frontal attack. Incidentally, you know as well as I do that all politicians are homebred. Why can an engineer or a writer be a deputy, but not a military man? A general is always a manager on a rather large scale.

[Vandenko] Do you think that the scales of an army and a whole country are comparable? A pertinent question: Can Lebed carry the load?

[Lebed] The question is not for me. I do not intend to ask anyone for advice.

[Vandenko] You will, perhaps, have to ask the people, nevertheless.

[Lebed] I am not talking about the people, but about those who are undertaking to determine my forces for me.

[Vandenko] Remember, in the film "Chapayev" Petka asked: "Vasil Ivanych, do you control on the scale of all mankind?" Consider that I am Petka, and I am asking you about Russia.

[Lebed] A stupid question. Why wave your hands to no purpose. After the passage of time all this could turn out to be simply comical, and I do not want to be a jester. In addition, it is not in my rules to aspire to something out loud.

[Vandenko] Do you try not to display your aspirations openly?

[Lebed] What is inside me does not concern anyone. I have been taught by wise people: First tear off their heads, then invite the interpreters of the Koran and propose that they explain everything. And they will succeed.

[Vandenko] Whose head are you planning to tear off?

[Lebed] I said that incidentally... I do not like to make superfluous movements. Do not rush, and you will succeed. The quieter you go, the wider the trap.

[Vandenko] Your aphorisms, or are they borrowed?

[Lebed] Life's wisdom.

[Vandenko] Do you want to publish a book of quotations. And call it, for example, "The Notebook of a Voter."

[Lebed] I have published a book.

[Vandenko] "I Feel Hurt for the State"? I saw it. But, nevertheless, perhaps a parenthetical word should be added to the title of your book? "I Feel Hurt, SOB, for the State"?

[Lebed] We do not need any kind of SOB's. The state will be revived even without them. Whoever needs SOB's, it will be bad for him.

[Vandenko] How is this to be understood? Is it a threat?

[Lebed] But why?... Consider that I misspoke. There will be no threats and trains to the North. God forbid!

[Vandenko] But what is to be done with those who disagree?

[Lebed] Convince them. We have already been through the heated freight trains. Both my grandfather and my father rode in them.

[Vandenko] Was your whole family in prison?

[Lebed] Almost. After all, they were all respectable people.

[Vandenko] Do you think that all respectable people should go through prison?

[Lebed] Unfortunately, that is what happened in the recent history of our country. Grandfather and his family knocked about in Transbaykal exile for a long time, and then he was in the war from start to finish, was wounded 11 times, was demobilized in August 1945, and in September of that same year was put in a hospital from which he came out three years later feet first. His nerves gave out, and all of his sores opened up at the same time. Grandfather was 44 years old, a year younger than I am now... But father, for example, received five years of prison in 1937 for coming to work late twice. He sawed timber for two years, and then the war broke out. Tree cutting was followed by a punitive battalion. Father was on the Mannerheim line, but—ill luck!—he got by without wounds, and he did not expiate his guilt before the Motherland with blood, the skunk! Therefore, they took a long time deciding what to do with Lebed. They sent him to serve more. The day he arrived in the unit was his first day of service. He served until 1941. He rolled back with the troops to Moscow, he was in the attack at Yelnya, and in 1942 he was gravely wounded, as a result of which one leg was 5 centimeters shorter. A Stalin order: The shortening of a lower extremity by 5 centimeters does not disqualify a soldier from being considered fit for frontline duty. Again the front and demobilization only in 1947. A good school...

[Vandenko] Several quick questions. Where have you lived in Moscow since returning from Tiraspol?

[Lebed] Before ending up in the Dniester region I held the post of deputy commander of the Airborne Troops of Russia. In December 1992 I received an apartment in Moscow. I am registered for it, and I live in it.

[Vandenko] Did you rent your apartment in the capital before you left?

[Lebed] Why? After all, I knew that I was returning. I went to the Dniester region on an assignment. Seeing me off, Rutskoy gave me some very emotional advice: "Watch out there, ugh!"

[Vandenko] With added epithets?

[Lebed] With added...

[Vandenko] Do you use Afghan service privileges?

[Lebed] I consider this humiliating. It is true that I went against the rules once in my life, I tried to get a ticket to the Mayakovskiy Theater with a veteran's ID. I heard a hissing behind my back, and since then I have no longer thought about my privileges under any circumstances.

[Vandenko] But this incident has not killed your desire to go to the theater?

[Lebed] The theater here is beside the point. The privileges are exaggerated, and the mechanism for their implementation is insulting for any self-respecting person. Only a great need makes it possible to reach into one's pocket for one's Afghan veteran ID. Life has not forced me into such an extreme yet.

[Vandenko] What do you think, are you under surveillance now, or, to put it more mildly, are you being observed by representatives of competent organs?

[Lebed] Of course. I am both bugged and followed. I am, you see, socially dangerous.

[Vandenko] Who decided this?

[Lebed] It was decided. And not only with respect to me. It is bad when in the opinion of the authorities there are more and more such socially dangerous persons.

[Vandenko] Do you have your own security service?

[Lebed] I have everything. After all, I am a general.

[Vandenko] And is there a guard?

[Lebed] A symbolic one.

[Vandenko] What number expresses this symbol?

[Lebed] A small one.

[Vandenko] You said at one time that you were not afraid of being without work after you left the Army. It is said that you are a good carpenter.

[Lebed] A good one. The military trade teaches a lot of professions, and you never know what will be useful in Solovki.

[Vandenko] Do you also see a place for yourself there?

[Lebed] I do not promise that I do not...

Russia: Miners Protest Yeltsin's Industry Restructuring Edict

MK2803064296 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by Yuriy Nevezhin: "Miners Ready To Enter Political Scene. Tension Mounts in Coal-Producing Regions"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Russian president's edict on restructuring the coal industry and creating coal companies, which followed a series of miners' strikes in February, although opening new possibilities for streamlining the industry, nonetheless failed to stop mounting social tension in coal-producing regions.

In a letter sent to Boris Yeltsin and First Deputy Premier Vladimir Kadannikov, Vitaliy Budko, chairman of the

Russian Coal Miners Trade Union [RCMTU], said that of the 26 trillion rubles appropriated in the state budget to finance the coal industry, in the first quarter, under a schedule approved by Viktor Chernomyrdin, only 1.6 trillion was actually remitted, with no funds whatsoever received in March. Protest action is brewing in the regions; at present the Partizanskaya mine is on strike.

Addressing a joint conference by the Coal Industry Board of Directors and the RCMTU, Rosugol General Director Yuriy Malyshev said that wages in the sector are delayed for more than six weeks on the average and that in some areas this figure reaches four months. "The debts are the main problem," Yuriy Malyshev said. "Compared to last year, they have nearly doubled, with 43 percent of the sum owed by energy producers. Electric power stations in the Maritime Kray have one to two day coal supplies, and in Vladivostok power is shut off every day for 10-12 hours."

It is known that prices for Russian coal in some regions exceed world prices and they cannot rise any higher. This situation, considering declining state support for the industry, compels the leadership to look for internal reserves. Conference participants see a way out in the technical modernization of the coal industry, a reasonable investment policy, and a reduced share of clearing procedures on barter operations and mutual financial settlements, which in 1995 constituted 70.3 percent of all settlements in the sector.

Yuriy Malyshev warned coal company directors that there is a great number of intermediary structures sponging on the industry and that the attention of oversight agencies will primarily be directed toward investigating their role in financial difficulties confronting the Russian coal industry. The current media attention toward the miners' problems compels Rosugol to maintain daily personal oversight over the processing of budgetary funds to support the coal industry.

This year's restructuring priority to close down unprofitable mines and keep the work force at enterprises reorganizing as independent coal companies comes under sharp criticism on the part of the trade union leaders. Vitaliy Budko told the Board of Directors that the decentralization of the industry in the present financial situation can simply destroy Russia's coal industry and called for issuing a joint appeal to the government to revise its program.

The rapid politicization of miners labor collectives not only manifests itself in strikes and spontaneous action in the regions but can also play a major role in the course of the presidential election campaign. According to well informed sources, the miners trade union will take an active part in preparing a nationwide referendum on amending the Russian Federation Constitution with the aim of instituting control of the social consequences of the government's activity and is also determined in the near term to hold a series of consultations with leaders of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, Yabloko, and a Yeltsin representative.

The aim of the meetings, which will take place in Moscow on 27-29 March, will be for the coal miners political association, the Miners of Russia — which has already asserted itself in the course of the strikes and is highly active in the Russian Federation State Duma — to enter the arena of the election struggle.

Military & Nuclear Issues

Russia: Grachev Views Chechnya, Arms Equipment, NATO

AU2703141496 Sofia STANDART NEWS in Bulgarian 23 Mar 96 p 15

[Interview with Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev by Ivelina Taushanova in Tula on 22 March: "General Grachev: Do Not Spoil My Mood With Questions About NATO"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev arrived in Tula on 22 March to attend the official completion of a settlement for the Russian military, which was constructed by the Bulgarian Glavbolgarstroy company. The General cut the ribbon and walked through the settlement, which is situated in the city's southwestern section. He praised the Bulgarian workers. This is the sixth construction site that Glavbolgarstroy has completed within the framework of the program for the Russian military returning from Germany. The General answered Bulgarian reporters' questions:

[Taushanova] Could you comment on our prime minister's statement, according to which Bulgaria will participate in the debate on the future expansion of NATO?

[Grachev] This question is inappropriate [neumesten] now. I am answering other questions at present. In addition, I am in a very good mood. You know my position on NATO's expansion. Therefore, I do not want to answer this question.

[Taushanova] It has been said that if you had not been prevented from doing so by Moscow you could have liquidated the Chechen separatists by now?

[Grachev] That is what General Tikhomirov said. I will repeat for the fifth or sixth time that had a decision on peace talks not been adopted after Budennovsk, we would have dealt with Chechnya by now. This

peace interruption gave the enemy the opportunity to acquire weapons and money. Now the situation is that the basic forces of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the special units are conducting actions in four directions — west, southwest, south, and east. There is no resistance in the eastern direction. A process of signing peace agreements with the populated settlements in the entire region is under way there. In the southeast the process is also developing successfully. In the north practically all regions are ready to sign and are signing peace agreements. In the west the situation is a bit more complicated — near Samashkiy, where many Dudayev supporters are concentrated. They did not anticipate our troops' sudden maneuver, and when they became aware of the action they tried to break out and encountered fierce resistance. Unfortunately, they still have not surrendered. Especially fierce fighting is going on in the southwest in the region of Achkhoy-Martan, Orekhovo, and Southern Komsomolsk, where the enemy is preparing for a strong defense. They are using the local population. Precisely this population is the main problem. Corridors are being opened for them to leave, but not all of them are leaving. Therefore we are not conducting military actions in the full scope we are capable of. According to the information we have, the southeast is the main resistance region, which is commanded directly by Dudayev. In a few days there will be some fierce fighting there.

[Taushanova] Could you comment on Primakov's statement, according to which Russia has special relations with Bulgaria?

[Grachev] I am the minister of defense, not the foreign minister. We have wonderful relations with Bulgaria. During the prime minister's visit agreements were signed on the supply of modern equipment and weapons. I have been invited by your defense minister to make an official visit to Bulgaria. This will happen when the equipment arrives in your country.

[Taushanova] It has been said that the equipment we have been given is of a low quality.

[Grachev] The equipment is of an excellent quality. This equipment has been conserved. It has never been used.

[Taushanova] When was it manufactured?

[Grachev] I am not sure, but you will not buy or get old equipment. I assure you, we gave you equipment our own troops are using. In addition, if we had sent you obsolete equipment I would not come to Bulgaria on an official visit. You would simply kill me.

[Taushanova] There have been reports according to which Dudayev is collecting money also in Bulgaria.

[Grachev] No. I do not have such information. I have no information whatsoever about Bulgaria and any possible connection between Bulgaria and Chechnya. Our intelligence is dealing with such issues.

Russia: Pacific Fleet Command Post Exercises Continue

LD2803100596 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0936 GMT 28 Mar 96

[By Yevgeniya Lents]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] VLADIVOSTOK, March 28 (Itar-Tass) — The largest command post exercises of the recent period are currently under way on the Russian Pacific Fleet. Taking part in them are nuclear-propelled submarines, surface craft of different types, naval aircraft, coast guard forces, navy headquarters and control bodies.

Itar-Tass was told today at the Press Centre of the Russian Pacific Fleet that a large squadron of warships had sailed out of Vladivostok the day before. Artillery and missile firing exercises were held in Peter the Great Bay by large submarine chasers "Admiral Panteleyev" and "Admiral Shaposhnikov", destroyers "Bezboyaznennyy" and "Boyevoy", small submarine killers and missile-launching motorboats. They practiced beating off air attacks. Planes of the naval aviation took part in the manoeuvres.

Small submarine killers laid mines in the area last night for other vessels to sweep. The submarine chasers will today stage a mock submarine attack with torpedo launchings and dropping of depth charges.

It is pertinent to note that this is the first exercise on the Pacific Fleet staged by its new Commander Vice-Admiral Vladimir Kuroyedov, who was appointed to this post early in March. The manoeuvres will last at least three weeks and will be enlarged stage by stage. New forces and means will be drawn into them. The Kamchatka Flotilla will join the exercises when the Bearing Sea coast clears of ice.

Russia: Chemical Weapons Destruction Program Outlined

MM2703144496 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 1

["Own information" report under the "News" rubric: "Chemical Weapons Will Be Destroyed in Stages"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A government decree has approved the federal targeted program "Destruction of Chemical Weapon Stocks in the Russian Federation."

The Russian Federation Ministry of Defense is the state client for this program.

The program plans in great detail a package of measures relating to our country's fulfillment of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling, and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. It provides, in particular, that all stocks of toxins will be destroyed during the period 1998 through 2005. The first to be eliminated will be stocks of vesicant toxins stored in containers — 7,500 tonnes. At the second stage it is necessary to destroy the toxins (chiefly organophosphorus) contained in the munitions of the missile troops, the Ground Forces' artillery, and also the Air Force — 32,500 tonnes.

It is planned to implement the program in full by the year 2009.

Russia: Statute on Movement of Radioactive Materials Published

MM2803115996 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 5

[Russian Federation Government Decree No. 291 signed by Premier Chernomyrdin on 16 March 1996: "On the Ratification of the Statute on the Procedure for Exports From and Imports to the Russian Federation of Radioactive Materials and Products Based on Them"; accompanied by text of statute]

[FBIS Translated Text] In accordance with the federal law "On the Utilization of Nuclear Power," the Russian Federation Government decrees that:

1. The Statute on the Procedure for Exports From and Imports to the Russian Federation of Radioactive Materials and Products Based On Them (appended) is hereby ratified.

2. The following shall be deemed to have lapsed in respect of exports and imports of radioactive sources of ionizing radiation and isotope products:

Russian Federation Government Decree No. 1005 "On the Procedure for Exporting and Importing Nuclear Materials, Technology, Equipment, Installations, Special Nonnuclear Materials, and Radioactive Sources of Ionizing Radiation and Isotope Products" of 21 December 1992;

Russian Federation Government Decree No. 1136 "On Amendments and Additions to the Statute on the Procedure for Exporting and Importing Nuclear Materials, Technology, Equipment, Installations, Special Nonnuclear Materials, and Radioactive Sources of Ionizing Radiation and Isotope Products" of 6 October 1994 (SOBRANIYE ZAKONODATELSTVA ROSSIYSKOY FEDERATSII, No. 25, 1994, p. 2706);

Russian Federation Government Decree No. 288 "On Amendments and Additions to the Statute on the Procedure for Exporting and Importing Nuclear Materials, Technology, Equipment, Installations, Special Nonnuclear Materials, and Radioactive Sources of Ionizing Radiation and Isotope Products" of 22 March 1995 (SOBRANIYE ZAKONODATELSTVA ROSSIYSKOY FEDERATSII, No. 13, 1995, p. 1148).

3. In position three of Appendix No. 5 to Russian Federation Government Decree No. 854 "On Licensing and Setting Quotas for Exports and Imports of Goods (Work, Services) on Russian Federation Territory" of 6 November 1992 (SOBRANIYE AKTOV PREZIDENTA I PRAVITELSTVA ROSSIYSKOY FEDERATSII, No. 19, 1992, p. 1589), Foreign Economic Activity Commodity Classification Code 2845: Make read "2845 (except 2845 90900)."

4. Position seven of Appendix No. 2 to Russian Federation Government Decree No. 758 "On Measures To Improve State Regulation of Exports of Goods and Services" of 1 July 1994 (SOBRANIYE ZAKONODATELSTVA ROSSIYSKOY FEDERATSII, No. 11, 1994, p. 1295), make read:

"Nuclear materials, technologies, equipment and installations, special nonnuclear materials, and sources of radioactive radiation, including radioactive waste — 2612; 2844; 2845 (except 2845 90900); 8401."

[signed] V. Chernomyrdin, chairman of the Russian Federation Government

[dated] Moscow, 16 March 1996
No. 291

Statute on the Procedure for Exports From and Imports to the Russian Federation of Radioactive Materials and Products Based on Them

1. This statute defines the procedure for exporting from the Russian Federation and importing to the Russian Federation radioactive isotopes in all forms, compounds and products (hereinafter, radio isotope products), and other radioactive materials included in subgroup 2844 40000 of the Foreign Economic Activity Commodity Classification Code, as well as the radio isotope products included in instruments and equipment in subgroups 9022 11000, 9022 19000, 9022 21000, and 9022 29000 of the Foreign Economic Activity Commodity Classification Code.

The procedure defined by this statute is binding on all subjects of economic activity under Russian Federation

jurisdiction, irrespective of the forms of ownership, affiliation, or place of registration.

2. This statute does not extend to:

a) radio isotope products included on the list of goods whose export is monitored by the Russian Federation export controls system and regulated by certain Russian Federation Government decrees, namely: tritium; radium-226; neptunium-237, radio isotope products based on alpha radiation-emitting isotopes with an alpha half-life of 10 days or more, but less than 200 years;

b) imports and exports of radio isotope products based on isotopes with a half-life of 10 days or less, as well as radio isotope products with a small radioactive content that is not covered by the PBTRV-73 Safety Regulations for the Transportation of Radioactive Materials, with the exception of imports of medical products;

c) exports of radiopharmaceutical products and sets of equipment for radioimmunological analysis.

3. Imports and exports of radio isotope products and other radioactive substances regulated by this statute are implemented under licenses issued by the Russian Federation Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations on the basis of standard-format applications agreed in advance:

— for radio isotope products and other radioactive materials (save those imported for medical purposes), with the Russian Federation Ministry of Atomic Energy under the procedure laid down by that ministry;

— for imports of radio isotope products for medical purposes, with the Russian Federation Ministry of Health and Medical Industry under the procedure laid down by that ministry.

4. The Russian Federation Ministry of Atomic Energy and the Russian Federation Ministry of Health and Medical Industry annually send the Russian Federation State Customs Committee mutually agreed lists of radio isotope products on the established product list, imports and exports of which do not require licenses — these lists to be agreed in advance with the Russian Federation Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations and the Russian Federation Federal Inspectorate for Nuclear and Radiation Safety.

5. In order to coordinate applications for licenses for the export of radio isotope products and other radioactive substances the applicant submits to the Russian Federation Ministry of Atomic Energy:

— an application in the format approved by the Russian Federation Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations;

— a certified copy of a signed or initialed contract (agreement) for the exportation of the products regulated by this statute;

— certified copies of a commission agreement (if the exporter is an intermediary) or a buying and selling agreement with a manufacturer stipulating the purchaser's right to sell the items covered by the agreement in different countries;

— a certified copy of the permit (license) issued by the Russian Federal Inspectorate for Nuclear and Radiation Safety to the manufacturer and intermediary exporter entitling them to carry out work to produce, store, transport, and provide intermediary services in the sale of radio isotope products and radioactive material.

6. In order to coordinate the application for the issue of a license to export radio isotope products and other radioactive material (except material exported for medical purposes), applicants submit to the Russian Federation Ministry of Atomic Energy:

— an application following the format laid down by the Russian Federation Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations;

— a certified copy of a signed or initialed contract (agreement) for the importation of the products regulated by this statute;

— a certified copy of a commission agreement (if the importer is an intermediary);

— a certified copy of the permit (license) issued by the Russian Federal Inspectorate for Nuclear and Radiation Safety to the importers entitling them to use, store, process, transport, and provide intermediary services in the acquisition of radio isotope products and radioactive material.

7. In order to coordinate the application for a license to import radio isotope products for medical purposes applicants submit to the Russian Federation Ministry of Health and Medical Industry:

— an application following the format laid down by the Russian Federation Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations;

— a certified copy of a signed or initialed contract (agreement) for the importation of the aforesaid products;

— a certified copy of a commission agreement (if the importer is an intermediary);

— a Russian Federation Ministry of Atomic Energy conclusion on the impossibility of producing similar products at Russian enterprises;

— a certified copy of the permit (license) issued by the Russian Federal Inspectorate for Nuclear and Radiation Safety to the importers entitling them to use, store, transport, and provide intermediary services in the acquisition of radio isotope products.

8. Any radioactive isotopes, radioactive material, or articles based on them will be submitted during importation to or exportation from the Russian Federation to customs controls and processing in accordance with Russian Federation legislation and under the procedure laid down by the Russian Federation State Customs Committee.

9. Persons who violate the requirements of this statute are liable to prosecution under Russian Federation legislation.

Federal Assembly

Russia: Upper House Expresses 'Concern' Over U.S. Cuba Move

MM2803115396 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 Mar 96 p 6

["Russian Federation Federal Assembly Federation Council Statement 103 in Connection With the U.S. Adoption of the Law 'On Freedom and Democratic Solidarity With Cuba,'" dated Moscow, 20 March 1996 — from the 'Documents' section]

[FBIS Translated Text] On 12 March 1996, altering his former position, U.S. President B. Clinton signed the anti-Cuban law: "On Freedom and Democratic Solidarity With Cuba" (the so-called Helms-Burton law), which was hastily adopted by the U.S. Congress. There is no doubt that the approval of this document, which provides for a tougher embargo against the Republic of Cuba and the application of sanctions against states, organizations, and persons maintaining trade and economic relations with that country, has been occasioned by the present exacerbation of U.S.-Cuban relations caused by the recent air incident off Cuba's shores.

The Russian Federation Federal Assembly Federation Council Statements 539-1 of 21 July 1995 and 622-1 of 24 October 1995 already pointed out that the so-called Helms-Burton bill runs counter to the universally recognized norms of international law and international trade regulations. The majority of world community states regard the embargo against the Republic of Cuba and the measures to make it tougher as an infringement of the rights of sovereign states to freely develop trade and economic cooperation with other countries.

The Russian Federation Federal Assembly Federation Council believes that the anti-Cuban campaign mounted in the United States does not help to normalize the situation in that region and confirms that Russia intends to continue building its relations with Cuba on the basis of its own national interests, primarily those of an economic nature.

The Russian Federation Federal Assembly Federation Council hopes that the U.S. side will take account of our concern at the adoption of the law: "On Freedom and Democratic Solidarity With Cuba" and will approach with special circumspection the question of the concrete, practical implementation of this document's provisions, above all those directly affecting the Russian Federation's interests.

[Signed] The Russian Federation Federal Assembly Federation Council. Moscow, 20 March 1996.

Russia: Duma Asks Yeltsin for Sanctions Against Estonia

MM2803105896 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 Mar 96 p 6

["State Duma Appeal to the Russian Federation President in Connection With Violations of Basic Rights and Freedoms of Russian Federation Citizens and Russian Compatriots in the Estonian Republic," dated Moscow, 22 March 1996 — from the 'Documents' section]

[FBIS Translated Text] Deeply esteemed Boris Nikolayevich!

Guided by Russia's national interests in the Baltic region, as well as the desire to arrange good-neighborly relations between Russia and Estonia, we once again draw your attention to the fact that the policy being pursued by the Estonian authorities of discriminating against the non-Estonian population and "gently squeezing" out of Estonia people whose mother tongue is Russian remains the chief problem in Russian-Estonian relations.

On 24 March 1995, after discussing the position of the non-Estonian population in Estonia, the Russian Federation Federal Assembly State Duma, first convocation, adopted the decree: "On Economic Sanctions Against the Estonian Republic," in which it recommended that the Russian Federation president consider the question of introducing economic sanctions against the Estonian Republic and maintaining them until a fundamental improvement in the situation with regard to citizens of Russia and Russian compatriots in accordance with the universally recognized norms of international law in the human rights sphere.

Measures were not, however, taken to implement that decree, and this is enabling the Estonian authorities to continue their discriminatory policy toward people

living in Estonia whose mother tongue is Russian. A number of legislative acts adopted in Estonia in 1995 have exacerbated their position. The Estonian authorities' unlawful actions in respect of Russian citizens, including the illegal expulsion of one of them from Estonia, have been followed by a violation of the rights of parishioners of the Estonian Apostolic Orthodox Church, which comes under the Moscow Patriarchate.

In view of the aforesaid we ask you to resolve the question of introducing economic sanctions against the Estonian Republic.

We ask you to inform the Russian Federation Federal Assembly State Duma of the decision that you reach.

Moscow, 22 March 1996.

Russia: Zyuganov, Others Explain Duma Moves to Army, Urge Vigilance

MM2703144696 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 26 Mar 96 p 2

["Appeal to Generals, Officers, and Servicemen of All Categories of Troops and Special Subunits," signed by Russian State Duma deputies Zyuganov and others; undated]

[FBIS Translated Text] Servicemen, guardians of the Fatherland's honor and dignity!

The deputies of the State Duma of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly who initiated the raising, in the lower house of the Russian parliament, of the question of overcoming the negative consequences of the Belovezhskaya Forest agreements in December 1991, appeal to you at this crucial moment. There has long been a pressing need for a political and legal evaluation of the acts that "legally" enshrined the breakup of the Soviet Union and marked the start of the destruction of Russia's statehood. The public's desire as soon as possible to close a shameful chapter in our state's history and open the way for a new stage of unification of the fraternal peoples has been reflected in numerous voters' instructions, resolutions of labor collectives' assemblies, and many thousands of letters and appeals to deputies. Therefore the adoption of the corresponding decrees by the State Duma on 15 March this year was first and foremost an expression of the will of Russia's citizens, expressed in the all-Union referendum of 17 March 1991, to live in a single family of peoples.

The Duma's decisions do not encroach in the slightest on the sovereignty of the CIS states or on the voluntary, phased nature of their mutual rapprochement. They constitute a just act. They won the support of the people, but were rejected by those who supposed to be guided by them. From them, we heard unconcealed threats to disband the State Duma and calls for the postponement of the presidential elections and for a ban on public organizations, which would lead in effect to the establishment of a dictatorship. Some people clearly cannot wait to repeat what has happened before in the very recent past, although neither the country nor society has yet recovered fully from the shock of the events of October 1993.

Not everyone then realized what had happened with the shelling of the House of the Soviets. They did not realize — so they got the Chechen carnage, in which the Army and the people are floundering in their own blood.

The country is in ruins, our people go poor and hungry. Old men who defended our Motherland from the fascist invasion are dying in the arms of their unemployed children. The Army lacks clothes and boots, the soldiers are not provided with minimal nutrition, officers wait months for their wages. Meanwhile the government does not fulfill its commitments and does not ensure payment for the maintenance of the Russian Federation Armed Forces according to the budget approved by the State Duma for 1996.

Today we are confident that the decisions of the State Duma and the calm and restrained line of conduct of the majority of deputies will meet with your understanding and support.

Be vigilant, there could be provocations against you. Remain within the bounds of the law and loyalty to your people — the highest repository of power in the country.

Remember: Under the Constitution of the Russian Federation the Army cannot act against its own people and their elected representatives. Do not allow the black shadow of shame to fall on the Russian Army. The people's memory preserves both victories and tragic mistakes.

Either we preserve the Russian State by joint efforts, or else the country will be plunged into confusion with unpredictable consequences for its peoples.

It is our common civic duty to prevent that!

[Signed] G. Zyuganov, leader of the CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation] faction; N. Kharitonov, leader of the Agrarian Deputies' Group; N. Ryzhkov, leader of the "People's Power" Deputies' Group; V. Zhirinovskiy, leader of the LDPR [Liberal Democratic Party of Russia] faction; S. Goryacheva, deputy chairman of the State Duma; S. Baburin, deputy chairman of

the State Duma; V. Ilyukhin, chairman of the Committee on Security; V. Varennikov, chairman of the Committee for Veterans' Affairs; V. Gusev, chairman of the Committee for Industry; G. Tikhonov, chairman of the Committee for Liaison with the CIS.

Russia: Abdulatipov Says Duma Working for 'Partisan Interests'

LD2703125596 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1217 GMT 27 Mar 96

[By Igor Zhukov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 27 (ITAR-TASS) — An influential deputy of the Russian State Duma accused the lower house of working to protect partisan interests of its factions as presidential elections are approaching, rather than concentrating on legislation.

Ramazan Abdulatipov said in a statement on Wednesday that the recent performance of the lower house of the Russian parliament demonstrated the "domination of narrow political interests over the interests of the state and legislation".

Abdulatipov, who heads the Duma commission for the release of prisoners-of-war and hostages in Chechnya, also said that the fact that speaker Gennadiy Seleznev represents only the Communist faction "binds the legislative activity of the house and can really lead to its dissolution".

Abdulatipov proposed to convene a congress of independent deputies from the State Duma and the Federation Council to discuss future legislative work in the State Duma.

Regional Affairs

Russia: Tatar Leader: Former Republics 'Destined' for Cooperation

LD2803112996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0926 GMT 28 Mar 96

[By Nikolay Sorokin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KAZAN, March 28 (ITAR-TASS) — Mintimer Shaymiyev, who was again elected president of Tatarstan (a constituent republic of Russia) last Sunday, is convinced that the Duma's Belovezh decision, inspired by the Communists, did not add any prestige to that party. "They have not gained anything by it, but maybe even lost something," he told Itar-Tass in the course of his first interview after reelection.

Shaymiyev, who earned respect far beyond the bounds of Tatarstan due to his rational policy, is sure that the former republics of the Soviet Union are "destined" to have closer cooperation than that of today, but this process should by no means be hastened.

"The reunification is already under way, but our levels of sovereignty and potentials are much too different. Not everybody is yet glutted with political sovereignty. They are still digesting it," Shaymiyev noted. "I am sure that the said rapprochement will take place within the next five years. It will occur even contrary to the desires of the leaders of some republics. Life will force them to do it," he stressed.

Turning to the upcoming signing of a treaty between Russia and the Belarus Republic, the Tatarstan President said: "Alyaksandr Lukashenka is resorting to radical measures because Belarus finds it difficult to survive alone — we are too closely integrated. And Russia, for its part, is a uniting force."

Asked about the possible outcome of the June presidential elections, Shaymiyev stressed that the people of Tatarstan backed Boris Yeltsin as a guarantor of the Moscow-Kazan powers-sharing treaty. At the same time, he believes that a different outcome of the elections should not be dramatised. "Moscow will not be able to solve a single major problem without us, that is without the regions," he stated.

Russia: Migrants Face 'Catastrophic' Situation in Tatarstan

MM2803091996 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by Nikolay Morozov: "Beset by Disaster. Refugees in Search of a Roof Over Their Heads"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Kazan — According to the Tatarstan State Committee for Statistics Demographic Statistics Department, over the past three years around 185,000 CIS citizens have come to the Republic seeking a better life. In all 37,000 of those who have consulted the migration service have been deemed refugees or enforced migrants. The main flood of refugees comes from the Central Asian states and, ethnically, virtually 80 percent of the arrivals are Tatars.

How is their motherland receiving the returnees? Regrettably, not as kindly as they would wish. "The position of refugees and enforced migrants in the Republic of Tatarstan cannot be described as anything but catastrophic. People with no home, work, or means of subsistence are effectively being pushed into the world of crime," according to a message to Tatarstan's president from delegates at the second congress of refugees and enforced migrants.

There is indeed a special government decision whereby migrants are supposed to be allocated plots of land

free of charge to build individual homes, given 10-year targeted interest-free loans, and helped to find a job. Regrettably, the document is clearly in many respects just a matter of words. Take the loan, for instance. As of this year every family of more than four people is being given nine million rubles. At current prices that money is barely enough for the foundations. Yet the people pulling up stakes generally arrive with empty pockets, having sold their apartments in their former places of residence for a song. In Uzbekistan, the origin of virtually one-third of the total number of refugees arriving in Tatarstan, for instance, an apartment cannot be sold for more than $2,000-$3,000, and a good half of the proceeds is spent on shipping a container and on family transport. And former Turkmenistanis who have ended up on the banks of the Volga are not receiving a cent in loans, because it is thought that people from Turkmenistan are fleeing not under pressure of circumstances but through their own whim.

The authorities are in no particular hurry to allocate plots of land for the refugees either. A decree on this was published three years ago, but in Yelabuga, for instance, last year only 140 plots were allocated; today there are 266 families without their own roof over their head, sheltering in ramshackle, dilapidated huts.

The Republic has an aid fund for refugees and enforced migrants, but its potential is extremely limited. They are having to make do with what little they can get. Plants do not even have money to pay wages, so migrants are mainly given assistance in the form of finished output. According to fund chief Yu. Kamalutdinov, it is time to put the migrant problem on a legislative footing and adopt a law on refugees and enforced migrants. Especially since the Republic of Tatarstan Supreme Soviet Presidium adopted a decree on this back in late 1992. Incidentally, sovereign Tatarstan has existed thus far without a republic law on citizenship.

Specialists in demographic statistics do not rule out the possibility that the difficulties encountered by refugees in getting established are also prompting a considerable population exodus from Tatarstan: In the period from early 1992 through September 1995 108,000 people left the Republic.

Russia: Bashkortostan Accused of Massive Rights Abuse

MM2703121396 Moscow EKSPRESS-KHRONIKA in Russian 23 Mar 96 p 3

["Own information" report: "Ethnocratic State?" — received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow — "The violation of civil rights and freedoms in Bashkortostan is taking on mass proportions," Russian State Duma Deputy Aleksandr Arinin of the "Russia Is Our Home" movement stated in his press conference 15 March. He believes that "the Bashkortostan leadership is deliberately pursuing a policy of creating an ethnocratic Bashkir state." According to Arinin, the republic authorities are pursuing a policy of "national democratism in relations with the Russian Federation" and supporting a line of "ethnonationalism in cadre, education, and cultural policy."

A. Arinin announced the setting up in Bashkortostan of a republic social organization "For Civil Rights and Social Justice." The association sets itself the goal of defending human rights in the Republic. Its constituent conference was held 10 March.

Russia: Khabarovsk Resumes Demarcation of Border With China

LD2803111496 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0800 GMT 28 Mar 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] After a recess for the winter, Khabarovsk Kray has resumed the demarcation of the state border between Russia and China. Large-scale field and hydrographic surveys on the rivers Amur and Ussuri have been carried out over the last two years. The state border should run in the middle of the main fairway of the rivers. In the sectors where the border has already been established it coincides with the existing nautical course. There have been practically no differences with the Chinese side in this area.

In the current demarcation period, the sounding and data processing will involve the sectors which China regards as disputed, such as sections of the rivers near the islands of Sheremetyevskiy, Venyukovskiy, and some others where Russians have been traditionally engaged in economic activities. Having taken a tough stance, the Chinese side suggests that this time methods for sounding be changed. If this is agreed, the islands could be transferred to Chinese jurisdiction.

The Khabarovsk Kray administration's position, which has been approved by the Foreign Ministry, is unequivocal: China's demands are unacceptable. The methods of sounding should remain the same along the entire Ussuri river.

Russia: Maritime Kray Warning Strike Threatened for 1 Apr

MM2703143196 Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Albert Kubarev: "What Is Pushing People Onto the Rails?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Alarming news is coming in from Maritime Kray. Desperate people are lying down on the rails in a last hope that this will at least force the authorities to pay attention to their plight.

Vladimir Chubay, chairman of the Maritime Kray Federation of Trade Unions, speaks.

"Need is forcing people to this desperate step. Many of my fellow countrymen have not received wages since last summer. In Bolshoy Kamen, in Arsenyev, half a loaf of bread is issued to each family per day. Wage arrears have reached 1.2 trillion rubles [R]. People have fulfilled their work for the state order but they are not being paid. Can they be indifferent toward that?

"Add to that a number of unpleasant surprises. Every day our electricity is turned off for 12 hours. Because of that pipes have burst in 51 apartment blocks in Bolshoy Kamen. There are eight submarines with operating nuclear reactors docked there. That means eight potential 'Chernobyls.' The submarines have come to be repaired but there is no state order for them. Perhaps we should set up a ships' cemetery?

"It is beyond comprehension how high prices are for rail and air tickets. To fly to Moscow and back costs R3 million! I do not know whether it is deliberate or not but our kray is in fact virtually cut off from the main part of Russia. Even the Czar in the past introduced the same rail travel rates from the capital to the Urals and then quite different rates, reduced to the point where they were almost nothing in Vladivostok.

"That is why the women of Bolshoy Kamen lay down on the rails in March, barring the way to trains on the Nakhodka-Khabarovsk mainline. And we decided that unless by 1 April the wage arrears situation improves we shall hold a warning strike throughout the kray. Everything that is still working somehow will be stopped. All other methods of protecting the working people's legal rights have failed to produce results."

Russia: Program Describes Vladivostok Environmental Problems

LD2703132696 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0800 GMT 27 Mar 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Environmental news: The Russian Supreme Court is to continue hearings on a move to rescind the president's decree allowing the import of nuclear waste into the country, following a statement by the international environmental organization Greenpeace. [video shows sea shores and various dumps]

The main basis of the Pacific Fleet and developed industry are in Maritime Kray. According to the territorial committee for environmental protection, there are 12,000 official users of natural resources in the kray, yet the environmental program is being wound up. There is not a single modern purification enterprise in the kray. There are some highly effective and cheap local installations, but the regional administration is not interested in them. There is a project for a giant plant which is designed to purify Vladivostok waters but it is standing still because of errors in calculations and crazy costs.

The is are dumping used fuel and possibly radioactive material here. The city dump in Vladivostok on the picturesque coast of the Sea of Japan is at the limit of its capacity but is still growing. The number of poachers both in the sea and in the taiga is also on the increase. [passage omitted]

In the meantime, a good environmental service could have added money to the budget in the form of taxes on fines. But alas, Maritime environmental department chief Mikhail Bibikov has been instructed by Moscow to cut staff by 30 percent. So the whole of Maritime Kray will now have just 165 inspectors.

Russia: Moscow City, Oblast To Subsidize Poultry Sector

MM2703164096 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 4

[Report by Yuriy Makhrin: "A Blow to Bush's Legs?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Russia is swamped with foreign produce. Meanwhile, Russian poultry production is on the verge of extinction.

In the Moscow region, for example, egg production has fallen by 42 percent and poultry meat production by 61 percent over the past five years. Virtually all poultry units have been carrying out wholesale reductions in poultry numbers because they cannot afford feed.

The disastrous plight affecting a sector which prospered under the Communists was examined at a joint collegium of the organs of administration of Moscow city and oblast, which approved a support and development program for poultry farming in the Moscow region. It has been decided to give the poultry farms subsidies which take output deliveries into account. The capital has allocated 110 billion rubles [R] for this purpose, while the Moscow Oblast Government has allocated R53 billion.

Muscovites can now hope that Russian eggs and poultry meat will not disappear from their shelves.

Economic Issues

Russia: Dubinin: Demand for New $100 Bills 'Inconsiderable'

LD2703142696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1254 GMT 27 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 27 (FIA-INTERFAX) — Some $20 billion-$25 billion in cash is possessed by Russian individuals and banks, Chairman of the Russian Central Bank Sergey Dubinin told a news conference in Moscow Wednesday.

Commenting on the introduction of new $100 bills in Russia, Dubinin said joint actions of commercial banks, including the use of "exchange accounts," will make this procedure smooth and easy.

"Starting from March 20, the Central Bank has been closely watching the work of exchange offices. Telephone lines have been open for people's complaints, but there have been none so far," said the official.

Referring to information from commercial banks, he said the demand for new $100 bills is so far inconsiderable.

In his turn U.S. Ambassador to Russia Thomas Pickering told the news conference that some $85 billion will be brought to Russia this week.

He said the cash delivery to Russia will increase two or three times because of the introduction of new $100 bills.

Russia: Prospects of Russian Eurobonds Viewed

MM2803121896 Moscow FINANSOVYYE IZVESTIYA in Russian 26 Mar 96 p 3

[AFI report: "Russian Eurobonds Will Appear Only After Presidential Elections"; received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Russian Government, which proposes to cover part of the federal budget deficit in 1996 by placing state securities abroad, will hardly be able to issue Eurobonds before the start of the presidential elections in June this year.

This was announced by a spokesman for a large Western bank taking part in the development of the project for the issue of new state securities.

According to the banker, right now experts from empowered banks through which the Eurobonds will be distributed among Western investors are working on defining acceptable parameters for the volume of the issue, its term, and rates of return.

In approximate terms it could be a case of the issue of Eurobonds for $300-500 million for a period of three years at a rate of about 5.75 percent per annum in currency. But it may take two or three months to establish these parameters precisely.

Here, even if the decision is found in late May or early June the financial market situation will not make it possible to place the issue successfully among foreign investors because of the imminent elections in Russia. In any case the appearance of these securities should not be expected before the second half of June.

As a whole the Russian budget for 1996 provides for the attraction of about $2 billion from foreign loans to extinguish the budget deficit.

Russia: Livshits Discusses Significance of IMF Dollar Credit

LD2703173896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1456 GMT 27 Mar 96

[By Robert Serebrennkov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 27 (ITAR-TASS) — A 10.1 billion U.S. dollar credit granted by the International Monetary Fund to Russia reflects a high degree of confidence in Russian President Boris Yeltsin, the Russian government and their policy, a presidential senior aide said.

Aleksandr Livshits, presidential economic adviser, told Itar-Tass on Wednesday that it would be wrong to think that the IMF is a political organisation. It is a purely economic institution whose decisions to issue credits do not depend on considerations of political expediency. The IMF makes its decisions based on the real economic situation after its close monitoring.

Livshits noted that the credit issued for a three-year period is critical to Russia not only because it will receive the first 4 billion U.S. dollar tranche in 1996 — "after all, we could get this money, although with a lot of effort, from other sources" — but also because agreements with the IMF are a symbolic sign of quality,

a signal to the whole world that Russia is a reliable partner with whom the Paris club of creditor nations, the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development can do business.

This means that Russia's creditors can reschedule Russia's debt and that foreigners can buy Russian securities which can be offered to investors in Europe, the United States and other countries, he said.

Another important factor is that the IMF adopted its decision to issue the credit at the end of March when Russia's main task was the payment of wage arrears, Livshits said. "We are paying wage arrears, but without breaking the law on the federal budget, the law on the Central Bank and the agreement with the IMF. For many this seemed to be an unrealistic task, but in spite of all that we are about to complete the payment of back wages. This means that we comply with out obligations to the IMF and other international organisations," he said.

Livshits expressed the confidence that the current credit will be the last credit that Russia takes from the IMF. "Three years from now, our country will be able to do without such credits," he added.

Russia: Implications of IMF Loan Examined

MM2803094396 Moscow FINANSOVYYE IZVESTIYA in Russian 26 Mar 96 p 2

[Article by Yelena Krivyakina: "IMF Credits Will Ensure Economy's Growth"; received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] The idea that in connection with the granting of credit the IMF will dictate to Russia the path along which it must develop for the next three years is wrong, Deputy Minister of the Economy Sergey Vasilyev has said. According to S. Vasilyev the agreement signed by the government, the Central Bank, and the IMF is a homemade product and so contains no concessions to the IMF on the economic plane. Only the form of the document is an exception. The text was compiled in accordance with IMF standards and is divided into numerous sections the same size as paragraphs. In all there are something like 70-80 of them. For Russia this form of compiling documents is not traditional. Nor is the practice of compiling the originals of Russian official documents in English traditional either.

Of itself the deputy economy minister's attention to questions of secretarial work seems somewhat strange in this case. Particularly against the background of the government agreement with the IMF on the repeal of all export duties, ready to come into force 1 April. Only the duty on oil will be an exception. It will be repealed 1 July. But it will be halved in April.

According to experts' calculations the proclamation of free trade will cost the budget revenue 19 trillion rubles [R]. It is planned to make up for the loss of revenue through excise duty on all crude oil extracted in Russia at the rate of $15 a tonne. For the same purpose the tax on the transportation of oil along pipelines, including for export operations, will be increased. But we will hardly succeed in completely filling the breach in the budget since the collection rate for excise duty is at least 30 percent lower than the export duty collection rate. Moreover, the government will probably nonetheless meet World Trade Organization requirements and excise rates for imported goods will not exceed the rates for similar Russian goods.

Foreign credits could bring temporary relief. In the opinion of Richard Leyard [surname as transliterated], an expert at the Russian-European center for economic policy, the replenishment of the budget through international reserves will force the Russians to respect the ruble and keep it close." The speed of circulation of money on the market will thus decline. Inflation, in the expert's opinion, will in the immediate future be no more than the March indicator of 0.4 percent a week.

R. Leyard views with no less optimism the prospects of fulfilling the measures taken by the government to extinguish wages arrears against the background of a substantial reduction in budget revenue. The proportion of federal arrears, from the expert's viewpoint, is not that high. And January, when the level of arrears reached a record 21.3 percent of the population's total incomes, is a special month for Russia. And when the time comes to fulfill commitments, R. Leyard believes, budget revenue will increase substantially. So far there are no problems.

At the same time R. Leyard is convinced that all the transformations envisaged by the government with the aid of the IMF credit will be carried out and will ensure financial stability. We can expect economic growth to be two-four percent in 1996 and six percent in the period through the year 2000.

Russia: U.S., World Bank, EBRD Loans To Fund Energy Projects

MM2703170196 Moscow FINANSOVYYE IZVESTIYA in Russian 22 Mar 96 p 3

[Report by Yuriy Nogotkov of the Russian Ministry of Fuel and Energy apparatus: "Foreign Banks Will

Provide Loans To Modernize Enterprises in the Energy Sector" — received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] A great deal of work is being done on a number of energy sector projects within the framework of the Gore-Chernomyrdin Commission, according to Aleksandr Misyulin, first deputy chief of the Ministry of Fuel and Energy Foreign Economic Relations Administration.

In particular, credit agreements worth a total of $729.2 million have been signed in relation to six of the 20 approved applications for credit put in by petroleum-extracting and oil-refining associations under the Framework Agreement with the United States' Exim Bank (with the "Chernogorneft," "Nizhnevartovskneftegaz," "Tatneft," "NORSI," "Tomskneft," and "Novoyaroslavskiy Oil Refinery" Associations). Real financing has already begun under agreements with the "Tomskneft" Joint-Stock Company ($92.5 million) and the "Nizhnevartovskneftegaz" Joint-Stock Company ($295 million).

Projects relying on Exim Bank credits worth a total of $3.8 billion have been drawn up for the petroleum-extracting and oil-refining industry and submitted for consideration to Exim Bank.

The World Bank is considering three loans as part of an energy efficiency program: $300 million to modernize centralized heat supply systems in a number of Russian cities; $300 million for a project to rebuild departmental premises and transfer them to the housing stock; and another loan to modernize gas distribution systems and improve the efficiency of energy use in 10 Russian cities.

A seminar was held in Washington in July 1995 to offer training in the preparation of business plans for energy-saving projects involving Russian companies. One project, to build a geothermal power plant in Kamchatka, has entered the first phase of implementation, and financing from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development [EBRD] worth $300,000 has been made available to conduct feasibility studies for the remaining phases.

The basic principles and means of implementing a project to modernize heat supply systems in a number of Russian cities have been developed in conjunction with the United States. Implementation of the project, including possible financing schemes, was discussed at a conference in Moscow on 14-15 December 1995, in which representatives of the Ministry of Fuel and Energy, the Ministry of Science and Technology Policy, and the Ministry of the Economy, and also the U.S. Energy Department, the World Bank, and the EBRD, took part. So far, no solution to the question of financing the project has been found, but there are hopes that continuing talks will produce a positive result.

A project to build a 900-megawatt steam-gas power plant in Krasnodar has been drawn up; credit to implement the project is being allocated by the World Bank.

The opening of the Russian-U.S. Oil and Gas Technology Center in Tyumen in September 1995 was an important event. To date, 23 Russian enterprises and institutes and the U.S. companies Amoco and Occidental Petroleum have concluded agreements to join the center. The center is working on several projects, including the installation of an Internet computer system in institutes, the organization of an environmental protection forum, involvement in the work of the Siberian Committee for the Prevention of Blowouts, and a number of others.

Russia: Pipeline Directive Criticized as Inflationary

MM2703165896 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 21 Mar 96 p 4

[Russian Federation Government Directive No. 356 signed by Premier Chernomyrdin in Moscow on 12 March 1996 under the general heading "Does the Increase in Transport Charges Herald Cost-Push Inflation?" with commentary by Aleksey Chichkin]

[FBIS Translated Text] To ensure the implementation of the program for the reequipping, modernization, and capital repair of oil pipeline transport, the proposal of the Russian Economy Ministry, the Russian Ministry of Fuel and Energy, the Russian Finance Ministry, and the Transneft oil transport joint-stock company to retain the fixed component of the tariff paid by the consumers of this company's services for the transport of oil for export for the period of repayment of the loan received for the implementation of the aforesaid program is accepted.

When concluding a production contract with the Transneft oil transport joint-stock company the Russian Ministry of Fuel and Energy is to ensure the observance of the payment procedure indicated and the monitoring of the targeted use of the resources received.

[signed] V. Chernomyrdin, chairman of the Russian Federation Government

Commentary

The government has issued a directive to maintain the level of Transneft's clients' expenditure on the modernization of the oil pipeline system. The pumping of oil is now a real "gold mine"...

To compensate state budget losses from the reduction and subsequent abolition of oil export duties, assessed by Russian Federation Finance Ministry experts at 8.2 trillion rubles [R], it is planned to increase the weighted average tariff for pumping (and transshipment) of oil by 73 percent — to R54,000 per tonne for 100 km. (Another "compensatory" measure is to increase the excise on oil production by a factor of approximately 1.5).

According to Russian Federation Economy Minister Ye. Yasin, "the increase in the tariffs for the pumping of oil intended to offset state budget losses from the abolition of oil export duty will be extended to all oil pipeline users." In his words, "it is more beneficial for us to collect revenue from the exporters but the IMF believes that exporters should not be pressured." As is well known, the abolition of oil export duties was one of the obligatory conditions on which the IMF granted Russia a $10.2 billion loan for 1996-1998. Consequently the increase in tariffs for oil transport fully accords with Russia's agreements with the IMF.

The lobbying by the oil producers and the oil refineries to persuade Transneft — the oil transport monopolist — and the government and Railways Ministry to cut oil transportation tariffs seems to have failed. It could not be otherwise given the revaluation of fixed capital which has begun in the economy and which is provoking a "surge" in domestic oil prices even if you discount the reduction in export duties and the increase in the excise duty on oil extraction.

However, the deterioration in the operational state of the oil pipeline network makes it necessary to raise charges so as to "accumulate" resources to some extent at least for the modernization of existing pipelines and the construction of new ones. At least 60 percent of the Russian Federation's oil pipeline network is in need of modernization now. At the same time, according to Transnefteprodukt's figures, new oil pipeline systems need to be built in the Volga-Vyatka region, the Central Volga region, East and West Siberia, and the Urals. Thus resources are also needed for new construction work.

As I have already said, the average tariff for the pumping and shipment of oil in the country is R54,000 a tonne. At the same time the cost price of transporting oil products by rail is almost twice as high whereas relative capital investments to increase "oil" shipment by rail are 30-40 percent lower than investment in pipeline transport. This latter fact is due to the government's acceptance of the proposal (put forward by, among others, the Transneft joint-stock company), as indicated in the government directive (No. 356 of 12 March), "to retain the fixed component of the tariff paid by the consumers of this company's services for the transport of oil for export for the period of repayment of the loan received for the implementation of the aforesaid program." In other words, there is no plan for a reduction of this component (and its proportion) which would go at least some way to checking the rise in oil tariffs.

In the immediate future oil pipeline tariffs will rise most quickly and consequently the discrepancy between them and railroad charges for oil will fall. This will make it possible, at least "theoretically," to reduce relative capital expenditure on increasing freight turnover by pipeline.

But the rise in tariffs for this type of transport will increase the prime cost of pumping oil and will also place it beyond the reach of many oil producers and refineries for financial reasons.

In July last year the leaders of 15 Russian oil refineries sent a collective message to the president and the Ministry of Fuel and Energy warning that the rise in transport tariffs coupled with an increase in excise duty on oil extraction would make oil extraction and refining in the Russian Federation and the supply of oil to consumers in Russia and the near abroad unprofitable. It seems that this forecast is beginning to come true.

Strictly speaking, Transneft's level of profitability is almost excessive and increasing pumping tariffs will raise it even further. In these conditions, however, effective demand for oil pipeline transport services falls and will continue to fall. Thus oil transport will increasingly be carried out by rail and in the present financial and economic situation there is no guarantee that the rail industry will not follow Transneft's lead and increase "its" charges.

In the period of the market restructuring of the economy, of course, it is inevitable that consumers will have to meet the shortfall in funds needed to pay for the modernization and development of the oil pipeline system. However, to set one's sights exclusively on increasing prices, tax rates, and transport tariffs (not just for oil output) means, intentionally or otherwise, fueling classic "cost-push inflation" which given the dollar exchange rate "set by directive" inevitably leads to a wave of inflation engulfing the entire Russian economy with all its consequences. In these conditions the implementation of the government's previous — tough — credit issue policy becomes improbable.

With regard to interregional transport and economic ties on the scale of Russia and the CIS as a whole, one long-term consequence of a "Russia-wide" wave of inflation

could be a reduction in competitiveness of the CIS countries' economies, primarily the Russian economy (which will trigger an attack of "cost-push inflation" on the CIS). A contributory factor here is the distances in our country which predetermine the major role of transport in the economy of Russia and the former Soviet Union and correspondingly an increase in the transport component in the price of semi-manufactured goods and finished output.

Russia: 'Sharp Deterioration' Likely in Employment Situation

MM2803104896 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by Nadezhda Sopova: "Glimmers of Light in Labor Market"]

[FBIS Translated Text] An enlarged collegium session of the Russian Federation Ministry of Labor has been held with the participation of the leaders of Federation component ministries and committees (departments) of labor.

The social sphere reflects the economic position in the country — against the backdrop of certain achievements the situation remains, as was noted at the collegium session, "complex and contradictory." Achievements? There have been some. In 1995 the production slump was halted and inflation fell substantially (from 18 percent in January to 3.2 percent in December, while the figures in January and February 1996 have been 2.8 and 2.6 percent respectively). The correlation between average earnings and the subsistence minimum wage has improved. The number of people with incomes below the subsistence minimum wage has fallen by 20 million over the past year.

But, on the whole, the population's real incomes for the year were just 87 percent of the 1994 level.

There are two main problems — the timeliness of payments (18-20 percent of total remuneration is not paid on time) and the generally low levels of pay.

Specialists are expecting a sharp deterioration in the labor-market situation in the very near future. Over the past five years production and GDP have fallen by almost 50 percent, while employment is down by just 10 percent. A subjective factor has been at work — directors have "considered it their duty to retain the collective." But we need to be prepared for massive layoffs. This is why a job creation program is being developed by the Ministry of Labor on the instructions of the country's president.

As an experiment the Ministry of Labor will create jobs in five or six territories so as not only to take account of matters from "above," but also to rely from "below" on proposals from regions with different labor market conditions. There are currently plants where a shift now means eight men instead of 400. The rest are on temporary leave. If strict criteria of economic expediency are introduced, unprofitable enterprises will have to be closed down. And this, in the opinion of Yu. Zabrodin, chief of the Ministry of Labor's Personnel Training Administration, means that around 20 million people will be thrown out onto the labor market. This is something that neither the economy nor society will be able to bear.

International Affairs

Ukraine: Grachev-Shmarov Talks To Affect Prospects for Yeltsin Visit

LD2803123096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1208 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TYSOVETS (Western Ukraine), Mar 28 (Interfax) — The results of talks between Russia's Defense Minister Pavel Grachev and his Ukrainian counterpart Valeriy Shmarov in Western Ukraine will affect the prospects for President Boris Yeltsin's visit to Kiev, a source close to members of the Ukrainian government told Interfax on Thursday.

At their recent meeting in Moscow, the two prime ministers, Yevheniy Marchuk of Ukraine and Viktor Chernomyrdin of Russia, did not manage to solve the problem of division of the Black Sea Fleet, he said. "While the issue of dividing the ships can be viewed as settled, the question of where the Russian and the Ukrainian parts of the fleet should be based remains open," the source said.

A member of the Russian military delegation, who arrived in Ukraine together with Grachev, described decisions the two defense ministers may take during their talks on dividing the Black Sea Fleet as "cautiously optimistic."

"So far the two sides have made no substantial progress as to where the Russian part of the fleet will be based," he continued.

About 10 documents concerning the development of military-technical cooperation and interaction in the area of sports and medicine are expected to be signed as a result of the talks, an Interfax correspondent accompanying Grachev reports.

Grachev and Shmarov are also planning to sign a document fixing a schedule for transferring nuclear arms from Ukraine to Russia.

Those accompanying Pavel Grachev on this trip include Commander-in-Chief of Russia's Navy Feliks Gromov and Commander-in-Chief of Russia's Air Force Petr Deynekin.

Ukraine: Kuchma Spokesman: Ukraine Unhappy With Summit Preparations

LD2803124196 Moscow NTV in Russian 1900 GMT 27 Mar 96

[From the "Segodnya" program, presented by Mikhail Osokin]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Unexpected news came from Kiev today. The Ukrainian president's spokesman said that Yeltsin's visit to Kiev, which has already been agreed, may be postponed. Ukrainian officials say that the possible postponement is connected with Yeltsin's pre-election campaign. [passage omitted]

One gets the impression that the initiative to postpone the visit comes from Kiev, however that is explained officially. One comes to the conclusion that Ukraine is not yet ready for these summit talks.

[Unidentified correspondent] The Ukrainian president's press secretary announced today that Kiev admits that the time-scale of the visit by President Yeltsin may be postponed due to the pre-election battle in Russia. Ukraine is prepared to be sympathetic to this. However, it did not become clear in the course of the day what this supposition was based upon. The Kremlin explains such statements as follows:

[Begin Sergey Medvedev recording over video of Medvedev speaking to journalists] The reason for a statement in such a surprising form by an official spokesman of the administration of the president of Ukraine should not be sought in the internal Russian political situation. In my opinion, the preparations for that visit have not turned out as the Ukrainian side would like. [end recording]

[Correspondent] As far as we know, the main stumbling block in the preparations for the forthcoming talks is the Black Sea Fleet. This theme was not worked through to the end at the working meeting between the prime ministers of Russia and Ukraine which was broken off yesterday. Today's statement in Kiev may be connected with pressure being brought to bear upon the preparations for the visit by Boris Yeltsin.

Meanwhile the Russian Foreign Ministry does not have any information either about the postponement of the Russian president's arrival in Kiev. [passage omitted]

Ukraine: Marchuk Sees No Problem for State in Minsk-Moscow Treaty

AU2703142396 Kiev URYADOVYY KURYER in Ukrainian 26 Mar 96 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Yevhen Marchuk on the Situation in the CIS: 'There Will Be More Work'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] "Every state chooses its external political course on its own," Ukraine's Prime Minister Ye. Marchuk said yesterday, commenting on the decision by leaders of Russia and Belarus to conclude a union treaty. "Our course is known — it is integration and economic cooperation within the CIS and the development of interstate relations in all spheres. I do not see in this decision anything that might create additional specific problems for us, because even now

we feel some nuances since the Customs Union started functioning. As regards political issues, time will tell. I personally do not see any obvious political problems here; they may arise and will most definitely arise, but not to such an extent as to cause us, at least now, to reconsider our external political relations with Russia and Belarus. After all, one must be ready for any turn of events and think what additional accents need to be made. It is necessary to make good forecasts and look at least half-a-year or a year ahead. There will simply be more work.

"During our recent meeting with Russian Federation Prime Minister Chernomyrdin and at the first session of the joint Ukrainian-Russian commission, we resolved almost all of the economic problems that had been raised. In particular, we adopted fundamental decisions on financial settlements with those natural persons, who had accounts at the former USSR Vneshekonombank. With regard to juridical persons, this question was put into discussion for the first time. It is a matter of approximately $668 million.

"The Eurasian Association for Coal and Metal that is being created in the CIS," Ye. Marchuk went on to say, "does not involve a threat for Ukraine to become a raw-materials appendage. We have an enormous need for investments in the coal-extraction branch. The fixed assets of the coal industry in our country have been depreciated by between 60 and 80 percent. At the same time, 43 mine drifts are now ready — just invest capital in them, and each drift means between 1,000 and 3,000 metric tons of coal a day. However, at least 20 trillion karbovantsi is needed to set all of this going."

Ukraine: Foreign Ministry Statement on Russia, Belarus

LD2803072996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0720 GMT 28 Mar 96

[By Mikhail Melnik]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV March 28 (Itar-Tass) — "Ukraine proceeds from the assumption that it is the sovereign right of every people to choose this or that form of the State being, which would accord with their historical, national and cultural traditions. This also applies to the entering into an alliance with this or that state," emphasises a statement issued by the Press Centre of the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry.

The statement was circulated on Wednesday night at a request of representatives of foreign media who asked Kiev's to set out an official point of view about the forthcoming signing of a treaty between Russia and Belarus.

"As far as Ukraine is concerned, the Ukrainian people have chosen the road of building an independent state of their own ands integrating it into the world community as a neutral, non-aligned country," the statement points out.

"Ukraine favours economic integration within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) on the principles of mutual benefit, equality, without any restrictions for partuicipants in the process, and views it as an important mechanism of support for cooperation between independent states in new historical conditions.

"Ukraine has always been giving priority to Ukrainian-Russian and Ukrainian-Belarusian relations," the statement pointed out. "It visualises the future of these relations in the development of really goodneighbourly, friendly, equitable and mutually beneficial economic, humanitarian and cultural contacts based on respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, the inviolability of state borders and non-interference in the affairs of one another."

"In the event of a new state formation, if such will be the choice of the peoples of Russia and Belarus, Ukraine as an independent state will develop relations with them on universally recognised international-legal principles.

"At the same time, Ukraine basically opposes any attempts to recreate the former Soviet Union in any form. Such actions may lead to the necessety of a revision of some priorities in Ukraine's foreign-policy activities, including those concerning the CIS," the statement stresses.

Ukraine: Protest Note Sent to Russia Over Forced Landing of Plane

LD2803121296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1009 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, Mar 28 (Interfax - Ukraine) — Ukraine's Foreign Ministry has forwarded a note of protest to Russia's Foreign Ministry over the incident which occurred with an aircraft from a Ukrainian aviation company in Russia's airspace on March 24.

"Ukraine's Foreign Ministry assesses the actions of Russia's flight control department, which forced the Ukrainian aircraft to make an unplanned landing in the airport of Rostov-on-Don, as 'groundless' and in contradiction of the goals of the Agreement on Creation of a Unified Air Defense System of CIS Member-States dated February 10, 1995," the note reads.

The incident involving the Ukrainian aircraft arouses doubts regarding safety of air traffic over Russia's territory, according to Ukraine's Foreign Ministry.

Ukraine's Foreign Ministry expresses its protest against the actions of Russia's flight control department and urges investigation of the incident and compensation for the "substantial" losses experienced by the Ukrainian aviation company, the statement says.

The Ukrainian IL-76 aircraft was forced to land in Rostov-on-Don on March 24 in accordance with demands from the Russian side, which asserted that it had not been notified about this flight. For its part, the Ukrainian party insists that it sent notification in time.

Ukraine: Foreign Intelligence 'Taking Advantage' in Sevastopol

LD2803122796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1209 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] SEVASTOPOL, March 28 (Interfax) — Foreign military intelligence experts are all over the Crimean city of Sevastopol, gathering information on the division of the Soviet Black Sea Fleet between Russia and Ukraine and taking advantage of the resulting chaos, a law enforcement agent in Sevastopol, who requested anonymity, told Interfax Thursday.

He backed up this conclusion with certain official information on the arrival of foreign military specialists visiting Sevastopol this year.

From January 31 to February 1, an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) commission met in Sevastopol. One of its members was a United State Army officer, one Rurtis.

February 4-5: A delegation of seven military personnel from the British Defense Ministry came to Sevastopol on an "officially friendly" visit. They were given a tour of the Ukrainian Navy Institute.

February 20-23: Another IAEA 3-person commission, one of them a United States soldier.

February 26-27: An inspection team from the United States and Canada, including nine officers, watched over the reduction of several individual navy divisions.

February 27-29: An official visit by a NATO delegation, with three officers from the United States and one from Holland.

March 25: Another delegation of foreign military personnel in Sevastopol, this one under the auspices of the TATIS-93 program, which holds joint military training, including foreign languages.

The agent pointed out that the above facts are only for "official" visits.

Major General Vladimir Kuntsevsky, director of the Ukrainian Security Service (SBU) in Sevastopol, has told the press that 16 "ascertained intelligence officers" have been discovered in Sevastopol in 1996 alone. These have collected information ranging from the problems involved in the division of the fleet to biographical information on the city's residents.

"We have located several attempts to discover government secrets and have attempted to close off all the possible leaks," Kuntsevsky said. His men have also discovered attempts to recruit Sevastopol residents, he said.

The lack of close cooperation between the SBU and the corresponding units in the Black Sea Fleet have negatively affected the security of protected areas, the anonymous agent said. Foreign visits to Sevastopol are no longer cleared through the fleet's command, which controls all the levels of secured objects. "The security of both Russian and Ukrainian defense secrets suffer as a result," he said.

Ukraine: Communique on Kuchma's Official Visit to Switzerland

AU2803074096 Kiev URYADOVYY KURYER in Ukrainian 26 Mar 96 p 2

["Joint Communique on the Official Visit to the Swiss Confederation by Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma on 22 March 1996"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On 22 March 1996, negotiations were held in Bern between the Ukrainian delegation led by President Leonid Kuchma and the Swiss delegation headed by Confederation President Jean-Pascal Delamuraz that made it possible to reach the following conclusions.

The official visit by President Kuchma acquires particular significance since it is the first visit to Switzerland by the head of the Ukrainian state since the proclamation of independence. The presidents of Ukraine and the Swiss Confederation expressed satisfaction with the harmonious and dynamic development of relations between their countries and confirmed their desire to continue strengthening and intensifying these ties.

The bilateral relations may even be more intensive, particularly in the sphere of the economy and trade. Switzerland took the opportunity to confirm once again that it will continue to support the economic and political reforms in Ukraine. The presidents expressed satisfaction at the recent signing of two economic accords and agreed to conclude, in the recent future, an accord on the avoidance of double taxation. The delegations also confirmed their desire to expand cooperation in other spheres, particularly in environmental protection

and mutual legal assistance, as well as education, science, and culture. The conclusion of a framework accord on technical assistance between the two countries and also implementation of financial assistance projects have been considered as highly desirable. Switzerland welcomes Ukraine's intention to join the World Trade Organization.

Ukraine and Switzerland, as countries that do not belong to any military alliances, emphasize the great significance they attach to the OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe]. They regard this organization as one of the buttresses of the architecture of European security. Ukraine confirms its desire to cooperate closely with this organization and support the efforts by Switzerland, as a country that presently presides in the OSCE. Both countries emphasize their readiness to discuss issues pertaining to a future model of European security and also the importance of preventive diplomacy as an instrument for supporting peace and stability in Europe. The importance of peaceful settlement of international problems was also confirmed.

Switzerland welcomed Ukraine's joining the Council of Europe on 9 November 1995 that attests to its place as a sovereign state in the family of European countries. Membership of this organization strengthens the democratic course of development chosen by Ukraine, expands possibilities of cooperation between the two countries, and will considerably facilitate the implementation of the reforms started by Ukraine.

The Ukrainian president expressed gratitude for the warm reception of the Ukrainian delegation and invited the president of the Swiss Confederation to pay an official visit to Ukraine at his convenience.

Ukraine: International Chernobyl Conference Opens in Kiev

LD2603110896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0908 GMT 26 Mar 96

[By Alla Moiseyeva]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, March 26 (Itar-Tass) — The participants of the International Conference "Chernobyl after 10 Years. Trade Unions and Problems Linked with the Closing of the Nuclear Power Plant" will today begin their work here with a visit to the Chernobyl Atomic Power Plant. The conference is being held in keeping with a decision adopted by the Brussels-based International Federation of Chemical, Mining, Energy and General Worker's Unions. About 100 representatives from foreign countries, including CIS nations, will discuss at their plenary meeting, which is to be held here on March 27, such important problems as the trade unions and nuclear safety, the social and economic aspects of the closing of the Chernobyl plant and the future of the Ukrainian energetics policy.

Representatives of key governing bodies were invited to the conference. The heads of many ministries and departments, as well as Chairmen of some Commissions of the Ukrainian Parliament, have agreed to attend it.

National Affairs

Ukraine: Kuchma: Parliament Unlikely To Adopt New Constitution

LD2703151596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1254 GMT 27 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, March 27 (Interfax-Ukraine) — Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma has called for the adoption of a new Ukrainian constitution in the first half of this year.

"However, it is absolutely clear that the parliament will not adopt the constitution," Kuchma told leaders of political parties at a closed-door meeting in Kiev Wednesday.

In his opinion, the parliament could "adopt basic provisions of the constitution with a simple majority of votes. In order to do this, it is necessary for a conciliatory commission to start working in the immediate future."

Kuchma said adoption of the Ukrainian constitution is somehow influenced by the Russian election campaign. "A certain preponderance of left-wing forces in Russia inspires our left-wing forces," he said.

Ukraine: Moroz, Crimean Counterpart Discuss Draft Constitution

WS2803102396 Kiev UKRINFORM in English 0810 GMT 28 Mar 96

[From the "Current Events" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] As the Ukrainian Verkhovna Rada's [VR] press service reported, on March 26, VR Chairman Oleksandr Moroz met in Kiev with a delegation of the Crimean Supreme Soviet led by Supreme Soviet Chairman Yevhen Suprunyuk.

The meeting focused on a draft Crimean Constitution with Mr. Moroz stressing the necessity for maintaining a constant dialogue on the issue involving the two parliaments. As the Ukrainian parliament speaker said, the draft's major drawback is that it contains a number of provisions inherent in a sovereign state, but contradicting Ukraine's fundamental law. The meeting's overall atmosphere was described as frank and friendly.

Ukraine: Ministry Calls Crimean Demands Groundless, Provocative

LD2803113896 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian 0830 GMT 28 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] On 27 March the Crimea Supreme Council adopted an appeal to the Council of Europe, the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Ukrainian and Russian leaderships.

In response to the appeal by the Crimean Supreme Council, Ukraine's Justice Minister Serhiy Holovatyy has issued an official statement:

"This document is nothing other than a slanderous statement against the Ukrainian Government, the head of state and the Supreme Council of Ukraine because the appeal by the Crimean Supreme Council specifically notes that 'as a result of Ukraine's actions, the autonomous Republic of Crimea no longer possesses any signs nor functions of autonomy.' This is untrue and in legal terms does not correspond to reality. At present nobody has repealed the law of Ukraine on the autonomous Republic of Crimea that defines the signs and functions of Crimea.

"The appeal also contains other elements that testify to its slanderous nature. Thus, in particular, it states that 'the autonomous Republic of Crimea has been deprived of the right to adopt its own legislation, taxation policy, budget, the right of territorial integrity, the right to protect its citizens, possess its own emblems and even its own title'. This is slanderous and untrue because nobody at present has disbanded the Crimean Supreme Council which is a legislative body passing its own legislation. Nobody has banned Crimean emblems because above the Crimean parliament and other government establishments there are emblems of the autonomy. Nobody has banned the title 'the autonomous Republic of Crimea.'

"The appeal is not only slanderous from the point of view of the existing state of affairs. It is slanderous from the point of view of the intentions of the Ukrainian leadership and the Ukrainian state to safeguard the autonomous status of Crimea in our constitution. The draft Ukrainian constitution itself provides for the existence in Crimea of a representative body that will adopt legally binding acts. Such bodies will not exist anywhere else in Ukraine. The Republic of Crimea will have its own government headed by a prime minister with all the relevant powers. No other Ukrainian territory will have this.

"Precisely in Crimea there will be self-government. Crimea will have its own budget and will have the right to introduce taxes and levies in Crimea, a right which other territories cannot have. Precisely in Crimea there will be other institutions and other rights that will define the status of the Republic of Crimea.

"Therefore, the appeal from the Supreme Council of the Republic of Crimea to international organizations, particularly to the leaderships of other states, is groundless and provocative."

Ukraine: Crimea Appeals To Restore, Preserve Autonomy

LD2703185096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1628 GMT 27 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] SIMFEROPOL, Mar 27 (Interfax - Ukraine) - The Crimean parliament approved an appeal to the Council of Europe, the OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe], the presidents of Russia and Ukraine, the Ukrainian parliament, the Russian Federation Council and State Duma and the Russian Foreign Minister Wednesday.

The parliament asked the presidents of Russia and Ukraine to include provisions guaranteeing the restoration and preservation of a truly autonomous status of the Crimean Republic in a treaty between Russia and Ukraine.

As a result of measures taken by the Ukrainian side, Crimea no longer has any of the features or functions proper to an autonomous region, reads the appeal.

Crimea cannot manage land or property, is deprived of rights to its own legislation, self-government, taxation or budget formation, territorial integrity, as well as of the rights to protect citizens, have its own emblems or "even its own name," the document argues.

"Such system of governance of a territory can be described as colonial," reads the appeal.

"Despite numerous efforts made by the Crimean side and the Ukrainian side's assurances as to the approval of a new draft Crimean Constitution, there is obvious reluctance on the part of Ukrainian legislators to contribute to the achievement of a result in the constitutional process," reads the document.

The appeal was approved by 55 of the 66 Crimean deputies present at the session. The Crimean parliament has a total of 97 deputies.

Ukraine: Police Find Stolen Cesium-137 Capsule

LD2703134896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1251 GMT 27 Mar 96

[By Sergey Kravchenko]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] DNEPRODZERZHINSK, southern Ukraine, March 27 (Itar-Tass) — Ukrainian

law enforcement bodies found out a stolen radioactive caesium-137 capsule and returned to the central storage of isotopes at the Pridnestrovskiy Khimzavod amalgamation, deputy managing director of the amalgamation Georgiy Olenchenko told the Ukrainian news agency Ukrinform here on Wednesday.

The caesium capsule was found by a pylon of the contact railway network on the dam of the Dneprodzerzhinsk hydropower station. An unidentified person indicated this place by telephone. An ampoule kept in a primitive lead package was put into a special container and returned to the storage.

Caesium-137 with an activity of 1.5 curie is of special hazard for human health. A five-minute exposure of a man even at a distance of one meter from a source causes destruction of the immune system.

According to information from the Dnepropetrovsk police department, caesium was stolen from a workshop producing ammophos from a work container measuring density of the chemical element.

The theft was detected on March 11, but the time of the capsule's disappearance is unknown, since the factory does not make stock-taking regularly.

Despite the return of the capsule, the investigation has not been stopped, and the search for a law-breaker continues.

Belarus

Belarus: SupSov Debate on Lukashenka 27 Mar Speech

WS2803082896 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 0850 GMT 27 Mar 96

[Belarusian Supreme Soviet debate following President Lukashenka's 27 March speech on integration with Russia in Minsk — live; in Russian]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Deputy Bahdankevich, Constituency No. 236] My question was prompted by the phrase reiterated by the president several times: Do you not see these facts? My question is: Do you, Mr. President, see that the Baltic states, Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and other countries which buy energy resources at world prices pay wages to their citizens which are two-fold and three-fold higher than what our state pays Belarusian workers? Do you not see that aside from prices, there are probably some internal factors which do not allow us to guarantee decent living standards for our people?

My second question is: Of course, we are surrounded by enemies. Could you name the hostile embassies so that our people know whom to fight?

[Lukashenka] Esteemed Mr. Bahdankevich. Let me assure you that I see everything very well, not worse than you, and that I possess as much information as you do. You, as a professional, should not have cited those examples. I see, too, that one of the Baltic states currently occupies first place in the export of nonferrous metals. Do we have to discuss this? If we applied your approach, we would have to presume that the aforementioned country is located on nonferrous metal deposits. The situation is absolutely different from the way you see it. I would like to underscore once again that I can see everything, the same as you do, but unfortunately I do not live in Poland or the Baltics. I live in Belarus, together with you, and I act proceeding from the current economic situation in Belarus and from my vision of its future development based on our people's decision and will.

As for our hostile environment, I will inform someone, but definitely not you, since you will not fight our enemies, but take their side, I am afraid.

[Deputy Tsyareshchanka, Constituency No. 246] Esteemed Mr. President! Thank you for the speech and for the information provided. I have two short questions. First: The steps you made toward integration with Russia are indeed an accomplishment, and they are part of our history and the destiny of the Republic of Belarus. What prospects do you envision for Belarus for the next 5-10 years? My second question is: Have negotiations [on integration] been conducted, including with your participation, with the leadership of other former Soviet republics? What are their results?

[Lukashenka] I am very sorry, but the two questions that you asked are so broad that a full day would not be enough to answer them. You ask me to outline a program for 5-10 years. If you mean the prospects for the development of Belarusian-Russian relations, I covered this issue clearly enough in my speech. In my opinion — and I believe that it is shared by all those who assist me — the main thing with regard to the treaty is that we are taking a step into the immediate future. We are not taking two or three steps, but the one step we are taking is gigantic, and it may lead us into a situation which we will be unable to predict. For instance, the first version of the treaty suggested the immediate establishment of a single monetary system. I categorically rejected those attempts, because we are not ready for this at this point. We are taking the step described in my speech, because we can predict its consequences.

Why do I say all this? Because after taking the first step, we will see what issues we will have to resolve in the future, and whether we should deepen and expand [integration]. We are going to sign a treaty that will only provide a framework treaty for further development of Belarusian-Russian relations. Life will definitely pose problems. At the same time, one of the final clauses of the latest version of the treaty clearly envisions not only our goals, but also what the commonwealth will guarantee in light of those goals: a coordinated economic policy, and that is why we have to draft joint programs for the next 5-10 years; the development and realization of joint economic and science and technology programs and projects; rational creation of new production capacities and modernization of the existing capacities, which will suit the interests of the two sides. I can explain this provision for you, given that you know the situation in the production sector. For instance, a new tractor plant is already being built in [Russia's] Lipetsk, similar to the Minsk tractor plant. What will be the consequences? Our plant may practically cease to existence. Why? Therefore, we clearly state — this provision was included due to our pressure — that we will use what we already have, if it is of good quality.

As for negotiations with other states, I anticipated this question and it is really a very important issue. We did hold such negotiations, for we continued the policy of the former Belarusian government — the policy of cooperation with other states. If you want to know the results of those negotiations, they are reflected in the treaty of four [comprising Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus,

and Kyrgyzstan]. Those states did not agree to go further than that for now. I repeat, for now. Time will tell what will happen in the future.

[Deputy Hanchar, Constituency No. 248] Mr. President, I think that you will not suspect me of sympathizing with national extremism. Therefore, I will ask my question in an open and friendly manner. Until recently — I emphasize, until recently — Mikhail Gorbachev was your principal political ideal. After your speech today, I have the same emotions as after learning about the Novoogaryovsk process [initiation of talks on the dissolution of the USSR]: the same promises of pie in the sky, the same endless oaths, the same schemes detached from real life. I have in my hands the text of the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreement. Using your own terminology, many issues — particularly in the area of military-strategic cooperation, customs relations, or a single monetary system — were much more developed in that agreement. Are you not afraid that your anticipated treaty will have consequences for the CIS similar to the consequences of the Novoogaryovsk process for the Soviet Union which you advocate?

[Lukashenka] Esteemed friend, Mr. Hanchar. Gorbachev is the ideal for all of us. Many people currently put all the blame on Gorbachev for ruining the Soviet Union, and the like. Indeed, he did not preserve the state, but the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreements are a different matter. They may have some relation to Gorbachev, but thanks to Gorbachev your name, my name, as well as the names of many people in this hall appeared on the political arena. Incidentally, Boris Yeltsin's name, too. Thus, let us pay tribute to the man who permitted our society to look at itself from a democratic perspective. For your information, we do not discuss Gorbachev here today. Regarding the essence of your question, the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreements indeed were deep and most developed. However, you are a lawyer. Look at who signed those agreements — Russia and Belarus? No, they were signed by 12 states. We cannot make progress in implementing them, which is not Belarus's or Russia's fault. This is the fault of the 12 signatories. Therefore, our two states — Russia and Belarus — are initiating progress in that direction. Therefore, you should not refer to some kind of Novoogaryovsk pie in the sky of Belarus. You should not do this. If we have a chance, let us make progress in this direction. This does not rule out that the remaining 10 states will probably join the process and we may follow the path envisioned in the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreements. This is what I meant, and you know this perfectly well.

[Deputy Lyabedzka] I have several questions and I am going to fully use the three minutes given to me by the regulations. My first question is: You repeatedly referred to the EU and the integration processes going on there. However, as far as I know, several concepts [for the functioning of the EU] are currently being discussed and none of them has been accepted so far. Among them is the concept of differing criteria [for states joining the EU]. Which concept was used as the basis for the future [Belarusian-Russian] treaty? My second question is: You know that I categorically opposed the ratification of the START I treaty and the accompanying Lisbon Protocol. I would like you to specify: Do you not think that we made a bad bargain with Russia? Based on the classified materials which I received after I filed my deputy's motion and based on my own methodology, it turns out that we have shipped to Russia at least $3 billion worth of tactical and strategic nuclear weapons. I do not take into account the great value of the USSR Embassy building and its grounds, on which Russia currently has a monopoly. Did we not make a bad bargain? My third question is: In the past, you had an explicit attitude toward the three officials who signed the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreement. Recently, there have been signs of a different assessment of their role in the signing of the agreements. Hence, my third question is aimed at determining each of the three politicians' share of guilt. If you were given such an opportunity, to how many years of imprisonment would you sentence Shushkevich, Kravchuk, and Yeltsin?

[Lukashenka] I am accustomed to those kinds of attacks, and I am sorry that in this hall you cannot rise above the level of provocations on the eve of the treaty signing. You provoke conflicts in Lukashenka's relations with certain people. I am very sorry about this. Nevertheless, I will answer your question, to which you — just as the previous speaker — already know the answer.

Let me start with the EU. The connotation of your question was that great debates are being held at the EU on certain problems. Let me ask you: Do they hold debates on a single monetary system, or has the issue been resolved by now? You do not have to come to the microphone to answer this question. I will tell you: it has been resolved. They have achieved an agreement on a single monetary system and a single currency. Do we raise this issue? We do not. Therefore, I have pointed out that our treaty is only a step toward the EU's [level of integration]. Thus, nobody should say that we are going further than the EU. Indeed, many proceses are debated at the EU, many stances are compared and will be compared, because all events have their beginning and development.

I do not know what kind of classified materials you possess, I know well all the materials concerning nuclear arms, both tactical and strategic, at least those available

in Belarus, for I have not received any materials from foreign states. I am not going to argue with you. You are probably absolutely right. It is not the point whether you are right or wrong. The point is: the nuclear arms have been removed. They were removed by our predecessors. What shall we do now? Do you want me to bring them back? Nobody will give them back to me, even if I want to do so. What shall we do then? Shall we follow advice of certain well-known politicians who, as I have been told, have suggested that Russia be sued for the Chernobyl accident and for tactical arms? Let us file a lawsuit. The lawyer who is your party colleague will tell you that we would have to pay at least a 40-percent fee up front. Given that the lawsuit would involve $10 billion, the fee would be $4 billion. If you have $4 billion, give them to me and I will try to file a lawsuit. Therefore, why talk about these things? When we discussed the destruction of the Soviet Union you said: Listen, it is all in the past now, let us not talk about this any more. As for other issues, however, you believe that they are in the past, but we should talk about them. There should be some kind of single approach. I have done what I can do at this stage, including the zero option. I have said that this is not a gift [from Russia]. Perhaps, this is only one-tenth of what we should have received. However, I do not think the situation would be different now [if Belarus had received its full share]. I do not want to condemn the former government or judge whether they were right or wrong. Please, take into account the fact that it was a general trend. The pressure on the part of the international community was so strong that it could have smashed [former Prime Minister] Vyachaslaw Kebich. The Kebich government functioned in specific conditions. Therefore, I do not want to blame them, saying that they removed [nuclear arms] and did not take an advance payment. Perhaps they could not take it, who knows? I am not in the possession of classified materials which would allow me to give a clear answer. We are doing what we can to receive compensation, including for the Chernobyl accident.

As for my assessment of the three officials who signed the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreement, it has not changed. It is hard to believe that you, a skilled politician, listened to my statement which followed the Russian Duma's decision [denouncing the agreement on the dissolution of the USSR] and did not understand its hidden connotation. I am sure you did understand it. I did not beat around the bush; I did not adjust my statement to the current situation; I am not a time-server. I repeat again, if Deputies Hanchar, Lyabedzka, Bahdankevich, [Belarusian Popular Front Chairman] Paznyak or other gentlemen join the process [of integration with Russia] tomorrow, I would not oppose them. We should use all means and people at this momentous historic period; we must not reject anyone. Therefore, as a politician living in real conditions, I take advantage of the current situation. It is not for me to judge whether this works out well or not. You can assess this trait as my drawback; I will not argue. I still have to learn a lot. Therefore, my assessment remains unchanged.

You were right, I started to express my assessment after I received certain materials, read the minutes of the meetings, and saw what officials said. Do you remember how our hero of the day, the deputy who is not here today, said: The unification of monetary systems is baloney? I read the stenographic record of Vyachaslaw Kebich's speech on this issue delivered before the Supreme Soviet. He spoke four times in favor of a single monetary system! Time has passed, but do you think that there is nothing left in our heads and memories? We do remember, particularly since everything was documented. Therefore, do not lie.

[Deputy Novak, Gomel Oktyabrskiy Constituency No. 83] My question is a kind of a logical puzzle. Therefore, I would like to refer to certain things first. We know from recent history that President Yeltsin is a man who forgets his promises. First, he said: Take as much sovereignty as you can chew. Then, after certain administrative entities of the Russian Federation wanted too much sovereignty for themselves, the war in Chechnya followed. Yeltsin is a man who did not tolerate any kind of supranational USSR bodies back in the Soviet times, which was one of the reasons behind his confrontation with those bodies. Therefore, there are doubts about the sincerity of the Russian president's desire to set up supranational bodies in the new commonwealth. Finally, Yeltsin is a man who signed the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreement on the dissolution of the USSR. Hence, my question: Should we pin hopes for Belarus's unification with Russia on President Yeltsin? What would change if we wait a couple of months until the presidential election in Russia, thus not influencing the outcome of this election?

[Lukashenka] The question has been asked in a brilliant manner. It is a wonderful suggestion, and I cannot say anything. I would only like to ask you: You will arrive at the same conclusion, just as I did after six years of involvement in politics. Please, understand — forgive me my tone, I am too young to teach you, but you should agree with me — all politicians act in specific real conditions. Do you agree that the trend to unify our two nations is an objective reality? You do. Why, then, do you link this objective process to only one person in the Russian Federation, who we should admit does have great power and authority. I would not do this.

I said in Moscow that everything now being done in Belarus and Russia, including by me and you — and you will soon be involved in the implementation of the treaty after it is signed [changes thought]. Incidentally, I appreciate your initiative, for it was at your initiative that I was invited to the Supreme Soviet so that you could touch upon this problem. Thus, you are involved in this objective process, because there was no other choice. Why, then, do we have to wait for something today? And what kind of hint is that: wait for a couple of months in order not to associate with Yeltsin, and only then sign the treaty? Do you already know the outcome of the future presidential election in Russia? Let me tell you that nobody can predict the outcome. Will it not happen that we, acting like time-servers, not only will lose time and pace in this good normal process, we may derail the process altogether. Finally, believe me, no matter who comes to power in Russia — there may be someone who will come to power and somehow hamper or delay the process — nobody will be able to reverse the situation. We had this kind of situation five years ago. And what happened? Nothing.

I repeat: The people and the economy push us in that direction. You mentioned supranational bodies and voiced your doubts, saying that President Yeltsin did not tolerate those bodies in the past and will not tolerate them now. The question is very proper in the political sense, although it is not widely discussed. Indeed, you touched upon a sensitive issue which concerns every politician who participates in this process along with other people and knows the facts you mentioned.

Therefore, we are making this quiet step in order to prevent turmoil among political parties or movements in either Russia or Belarus, and to avoid a hue and cry to the effect that Russia supports Belarus or that Belarus feeds Russia. This step could have been made long ago. If we had made this step in the Belovezhskaya Pushcha, we would have gone even further. Therefore, we are acting very cautiously and we are going to grant to supranational bodies those powers which will not give grounds to certain politicians in either state to ruin those bodies. This is only our first step. Everything has been calculated and taken into account. Altogether, you raised the issues which concern all politicians involved in the process of Belarusian-Russian integration.

[Deputy Abramava, Academic Constituency No. 242] Mr. President, I will not ask the question which worries me, namely: Where will decisions be made on Belarus' policy after the treaty is signed? You know that I do not belong to national radicals. I have two questions which cannot but worry me both as a deputy and as a citizen. You usually evade definitions of the nature of the new union: whether it will be a federation or a confederation. Perhaps, this is correct and is not worth mentioning at this point. However, as ancient philosophers said, by determining basic notions one can avoid many mistakes. Judging by the information that we receive about the treaty, the new union better suits the definition of confederation, with the exception of one principle: the combination of efforts of heads of the executive power [words indistinct]. There are two exits from a confederation — either full secession and independent existence of states or a federation, from which there is no exit envisioned by the legislation under any circumstances. Therefore, I am worried by the following problem: What if the integration process, despite all the talk about independence and about keeping our sovereignty, gains momentum and becomes uncontrollable by politicians? Will we not waste our only opportunity to function as an independent state? My second question is: Let us imagine a situation when, for some reason, the Belarusian Supreme Soviet does not ratify the treaty. What will be the executive authorities further steps regarding the current makeup of the Supreme Soviet?

[Lukashenka] Esteemed Volha Mikhaylawna, I will give you a more detailed answer to the second question during a recess after the session. This will close the issue. Right now, I will say: It is your constitutional right to ratify or not ratify the treaty. Today's debate will be some kind of indicator for me, as a politician, of whether the treaty will be ratified proceeding from the tenets that I have presented to you. Third, as a politician, I am sure that the current makeup of the Supreme Soviet will ratify the treaty. What makes me think so? I believe that you are people who know how to keep their promises. Why? Most of you had this concept [of integration with Russia] in their election platforms. There are maybe 10 people who simply ignored this issue in their election campaigns. However, nobody among the people sitting in this hall opposed it. I base my conclusions on specific facts from a year or six months ago. I particularly refer to you, Volha Mikhaylawna, given that you were elected in the recent repeat elections. Why should I not trust what you said very recently on television. You did not ask then where the decisions will be made. Why? This is a very appropriate question and it should be asked. The fate of our state will be resolved in the hero city of Minsk on the territory of our state. You and I will make those decisions — the two bodies, the two institutions elected by the people, and only by these two institutions — the Supreme Soviet and the government and according to the Constitution. Nobody will resolve our fate for us, and we do not ask anyone to do so.

You also asked an interesting and very appropriate question about the momentum [of the intergration]. I think that you, as a sociologist, know that we are here to prevent that momentum. Even if we are unable to avoid it, we will at least turn it in the right direction. Therefore, everything will depend on us again. You believe that the treaty has signs of a confederation. Let me tell you: I can see in the treaty certain traits of a transitional period which I think will last for around 18 months. If during this period we approach the issue of a single monetary system, a single constitution, and some other issues, the people will have the exclusive right to resolve this issue. It will not be resolved by either me or you. Then we will have to seek advice from the people on the basic aspects. If, as a result of the transitional period, we see things mentioned by the previous speaker, related to President Yeltsin's personality, if we see that forces rise in Russia which are currently not ready to cooperate on those principles [words indistinct].

Therefore, we should not talk here today about any forms of state structure, including a confederation, a federation, and the like, because we may scare the people and the politicians off this process. Let us resolve the issues which have already amassed within the framework of the [anticipated] treaties and agreements.

Belarus: President: Ukrainian Leaders Prevent Integration Into CIS

LD2703205596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1905 GMT 27 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MINSK, Mar 27 (Interfax-West) — Only the position of the Ukrainian leadership prevents Ukraine from joining the intensifying integration within CIS, Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka told Interfax Wednesday.

Although the forces opposing integration are more powerful in Ukraine than in Belarus, and there is "a special point of view on the issue in western Ukraine," this is no reason why Kiev should not join a closer union, which Belarus and Russia intend to agree upon in Moscow on April 2, he said.

"I doubt that Ukrainian people's mentality is different from that of the peoples of Belarus and Russia," said Lukashenka.

"Having chosen my course towards integration and feeling popular support, I cannot turn back," he said.

Lukashenka has called the Commonwealth of Independent States a structure that is amorphous and anything but stiff, within which only 5 percent of reached agreements are implemented.

The signing of the Belarusian-Russian union treaty in Moscow, planned for April 2, will be "a political push which will revive the situation in the Commonwealth," Lukashenka told Interfax in an exclusive interview Wednesday.

The treaty's signing may become "an example for other republics," he said.

The Belarusian-Russian union is a well-thought-out frank move by both countries, which has "nothing to do with the political conjuncture of the present moment," Lukashenka said.

When asked about the powers of the future supreme council planned to be created within the future Russian-Belarusian union, he said this structure would primarily deal with "pursuing a coordinated economic policy, including a pricing policy."

Belarus: Lukashenka Says Nuclear Missiles To Be Withdrawn By 1997

LD2703195996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1859 GMT 27 Mar 96

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MINSK, March 27 (Interfax-West) — Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka offered promises in parliament on Wednesday [27 March] to withdraw the 18 remaining nuclear missiles from the country by the end of this year.

A total of 63 missiles have been withdrawn from Belarus in the three years since it declared itself as a nuclear-free state.

The president warned against any rush, saying the missiles would be withdrawn as scheduled before.

He described as untrue allegations that there are plans to deploy Russian nuclear weapons in Belarus and Kaliningrad region.

Belarus: Lukashenka Says No Belarus Involvement in Chechnya

LD2603171796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1602 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MINSK, March 26 (Interfax-West) - The proposed Russian-Belarusian union does not envision Belarusian troops' engagement in Chechnya or other hotspots in Russia, Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka told workers of the Minsk Tractor Plant Tuesday.

"Ultra-right political forces led by the opposition Popular Front of Belarus (BNF) spread these deliberate lies

at rallies," he said. "They aim to discredit the very idea of popular unification before the public."

"My elder son will be serving in the army in two years, while my younger son will in four years, and I am not an enemy to my children to send them to war," Lukashenka said.

The Russian-Belarusian union will improve the economic situation in both countries and normalize that of many enterprises there, he said.

Belarus: Lukashenka Issues Edict on Excise Taxes

WS2703150196 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 1300 GMT 27 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] With the aims of putting in order the collection of excise taxes on imported commodities and ending illegal imports and their sales on Belarusian territory, President Alyaksandr Lukashenka has signed an edict which introduces amendments and supplements earlier edicts on the collection of excise taxes. The full text of the edict will be published in the press.

Belarus: Authorities Planning To Take Action Against Opposition

LD2603220796 Moscow NTV in Russian 1900 GMT 26 Mar 96

[From the "Segodnya" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] To judge by all events, the Belarus authorities have moved to take decisive action against the opposition, following the mass demonstration in Minsk on 24 March and the subsequent clashes between the demonstrators, OMON [special purpose militia detachment], and militia. As Minsk Prosecutor Nikalay Kondratsyew said in an interview to NTV today, a criminal case may be opened against the organizers of the demonstration.

[Begin Kondratsyew recording] I cannot say with certainty yet, but this will evidently be the case, because actions by groups were committed, in crude violation of public order. [end recording]

For its turn, the does not rule out the possibility of going underground.

[Begin recording] [Syargey Navumchyk, press secretary of Belarus Popular Front] We presume the authorities are preparing to place a ban on the Belarus Popular Front, as we have been informed before. However, the Belarus Popular Front is preared to work clandestinely, as well. [end recording]

Moderate critics of Alyaksandr Lukashenka do not think that the majority of the republic's population will accept extreme forms of confrontation.

[Begin recording] [Alyaksandr Dabravolski, Supreme Soviet deputy] Some sort of sensible compromise is needed, where the authorities allow the public to voice its opinion and the public does not opt for conflict with the bodies of power. [end recording]

Late yesterday evening summons to appear before the militia were delivered to the homes of a number of opposition activists. It is as yet hard to say whether the authorities will embark on banning the Belarus Popular Front and taking tough measures against opposition leaders, or whether they will prefer to neutralize the opposition leaders psychologically by signing, as a minimum, a big treaty between Belarus and Russia.

Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan: Official: CIS Union To Help Move Goods, Money, Services

LD2603184996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1712 GMT 26 Mar 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A major goal of the agreement on furthering economic and humanitarian integration between Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia to be signed in Moscow on Friday is to create conditions for the free movement of capital, goods and services between the four countries and for the establishment of transnational companies and groups, Kazakh presidential press secretary Dulat Kuanishev said in an exclusive interview with Interfax on Tuesday.

The new integration association formed by the four CIS states must be built on the principle of the European Union, he said. "Our countries will be able to complete unifying processes faster by using the experience of the European Union's evolution," Kuanishev noted.

Almaty believes that such a union must be built on the principles of equality between its participants, and respect for the independence and sovereignty of all, he pointed out. "This union must not enter into conflict with the tasks and goals of the CIS," he said.

In addition to President Nursultan Nazarbayev, the Kazakh delegation will include Prime Minister Akezhan Qazhygeldin, several cabinet ministers and representatives from both houses of Kazakhstan's parliament, Kuanishev said.

Earlier, Nazarbayev told Interfax that the agreement on strengthening economic and humanitarian cooperation provides for establishing a unified customs space and forming monetary, energy, transport and interbank unions. "In the future, when reforms and economic stabilization reach a higher level, it will be possible to speak about transition to equivalent money, a supranational currency, as in Europe," Nazarbayev said.

However he pointed out that "to revive the USSR is out of the question." Almaty does not support the idea of a confederation either, he said.

Kazakhstan: U.S. Officials To Witness Destruction of Nuclear Site

LD2703130796 Almaty Kazakh Television First Program Network in Russian 1500 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] KAZAKHSTAN TODAY reports: Under an agreement between the nuclear safety agency of the United States and the national nuclear research center of Kazakhstan [both bodies as heard], work is now under way to seal off galleries in the Degelen mountain range where the Semipalatinsk test site was situated. The first explosion in gallery 191 is scheduled for 2 April. Representatives from the Government of Kazakhstan, and officials from the embassy and Defense Department of the United States are expected to come to Degelen on the day the gallery is to be destroyed.

Kazakhstan: Majority Still Favor USSR Links, Communist Leadership

MM2803103096 Moscow SELSKAYA ZHIZN in Russian 28 Mar 96 p 4

[Report by Vladimir Yelufimov: "But the People Are for the USSR"]

[FBIS Translated Text] For two months now a red banner bearing a hammer and sickle has fluttered above the playground in the yard of the block housing the SELSKAYA ZHIZN correspondents' center and no one has tried to remove it. Nearby, on the end wall of "Rossiya," one of the biggest food stores in Almaty, you can see "USSR" painted in huge letters. It has been there since the days when it still had concrete meaning. Many symbols of the old state still remain in the republic. Incidentally, the exchange of identity cards is going extremely badly — Kazakhstanis want to hang on to the card with the hammer and sickle emblem for as long as possible.

A recent poll established that the majority of adults in the republic regret the breakup of the Union. Asked what they think of the idea of restoring the USSR, 68.6 percent said they backed the idea, moreover 40.8 percent believe that it can be done peacefully. Despite the massive indoctrination effort mounted in the media, particularly on radio and television, by the national elite, many Kazakhstanis approved the Russian State Duma's decision to denounce the accords signed in Belovezhskaya Pushcha. Among the Russian presidential candidates they prefer communist G. Zyuganov, who is not tarnished by involvement in the breakup of the USSR.

Kazakhstan: Organizers of Unsanctioned Pro-USSR Rallies Punished

LD2703194296 Almaty Kazakh Television First Program Network in Russian 1325 GMT 27 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The unsanctioned rallies and demonstrations that took place in many Kazakh towns on 16-17 March with slogans calling for the restoration of the USSR, have brought big trouble for their organizers, namely, the Communist party, the Workers' Movement, Lad Concord, Russian Community and others.

In Karaganda, for instance, two leaders of the Communist Party regional committee have both been fined 1,000 tenge. In East Kazakhstan Region, the Russian Altay national group, Russian Community, the Ust-Kamenogorsk Slavonic culture association and the Lad movement's regional branch have been suspended for six months and fines have also been imposed on them by an order of the head of the regional justice department. In Pavlodar, the first secretary of the Communist Party regional committee and two executives of the town administration who gave verbal approval for the holding of the rally have been brought to administrative account. In Almaty, one of the active organizers of the rally, Petr Khalov, has been fined 500 tenge. A cochairman of the Workers' Movement, Madil Ismailov, was taken into custody for five days.

The office of the prosecutor general and regional prosecutors are now investigating whether the founding documents of the Kazakh Communist Party contradict the law.

Kazakhstan: Nazarbayev Sends New Year Greetings to Iran

LD2703174396 Tehran IRNA in English 1432 GMT 27 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Almaty, March 27, IRNA — Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev in a message sent to President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani on Wednesday, congratulated him, the cabinet and the Iranian nation on the new Iranian year (Nowrooz), marking vernal equinox.

Nazarbayev wished health, prosperity and happiness for the Iranian officials and people and expressed hope that Tehran-Almaty ties would further expand.

Kazakh Foreign Minister Qasymzhomart Toqayev also sent a congratulatory message to his Iranian counteprart 'Ali Akbar Velayati on the same occasion.

Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan: Akayev Planning Major Regional Government Reshuffle

LD2603185896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1821 GMT 26 Mar 96

[By Alisher Niyazov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BISHKEK March 26 (Itar-Tass) — Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev plans a major reshuffle of regional governors this week to fight corruption and weaken local clans in the south and north of the country.

Tass learned in the presidential administration on Tuesday that the reshuffle would involve 80-90 per cent of regional leaders. Southern governors would have to periodically exchange places with northern colleagues and vice versa. The rotation periods have not been fixed so far.

A spokesman of the administration told Tass that "the measures will help weaken regional and local ties in Kyrgyz society, as well as to decrease the scope of corruption among local governors".

The rotation is one of the measures fixed by the recent presidential decree on strengthening the role of local executive authorities.

Kyrgyzstan: Official Explains Changes to Regional Administration

LD2703131696 Bishkek Kyrgyz Radio First Program Network in Russian 1200 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The decree by President Askar Akayev of the Kyrgyz Republic to introduce measures to increase the roles and responsibilities of the heads of local state administrations and local self-governments was received with very great interest at the briefing held yesterday at the Kabar National Telecommunications and Information Agency.

From now on, the rights and duties of the heads of regions have been expanded. The akims [heads of state administrations] will now be named governors [gubernatory]. They will be the chief responsible persons in the territory of a region, bearing responsibility for the social and economic requirements and [word indistinct] in the territory in their charge.

The governors will be appointed for four years. (Omuraliyev), the head of department of the president's administration, answered many questions put by participants at the briefing.

[Begin (Omuraliyev) recording] This decree covers the development of territorial administration, state administration, and self- government, generally speaking, in our republic to the utmost — in other words, from regional to village level. Based on world-wide practice, the decree establishes that the heads of regional state administrations, we call them akims of regions, will at the same time be the chief responsible state officials, in other words, they will be governors who bear personal responsibility for state discipline and public order in the territory in their charge, and for the socioeconomic development of this territory.

For the first time, the decree divides duties between the state administration of a region and the self-government bodies. [passage omitted]

There are 15 specific points in which, under these criteria, governors of regions must bear responsibility. They are, first, the strict observance of state discipline and public order in the territory in their charge, and ensuring that citizens' rights, freedoms, and legal interests are protected reliably.

Second, ensuring the interaction and coordinated [word indistinct] of all territorial bodies of state power and local self-government bodies in increasing their responsibility to the interests of the state and people.

Third, it is the implementation of state control over the legality, efficiency, and effectiveness of the work of territorial bodies of the local state powers and local self-government.

The governor will also have responsibility for establishing communal property and the financial and economic foundation of the local self-government.

Finally, the main point is that the governors will have personal responsibility, first, for the strict performance of the state budget, second, for tax discipline in the territory and, consequently, for the timely payment of pensions, benefits, grants and wages, for rational management of state property in the territory in their charge, for ensuring the targeted and effective use of state investments allocated to the territory, and for execution of the social welfare guarantees which have been established by the law. [end recording]

Kyrgyzstan: Duties Distributed Among Premier, Deputy Premiers

LD2703155496 Bishkek Kyrgyz Radio First Program Network in Kyrgyz 1400 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Resolution of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic to distribute duties among the prime minister and deputy prime ministers of the Kyrgyz Republic.

The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic resolves that:

1. The following distribution of duties between the prime minister and the deputy prime ministers of the Kyrgyz Republic should be approved:

Prime Minister Apas Dzhumagulov of the Kyrgyz Republic will be responsible for general leadership, finance, legal policy, selection of specialists, law-enforcement bodies and defense, foreign policy, mobilization and state reserves, matters of economic policy, coordination of foreign economic relations and investments, and reinforcement of public order in the republic.

Abdyzhapar Tagayev, first deputy prime minister of the Kyrgyz Republic, will be responsible for working out and implementing general economic reforms, financial, credit, and labor policy, social security and employment of the public, state statistics, transport, communications and the local economy, conceptual matters, and coordination of the denationalization and privatization processes.

Mira] Jangaracheva, deputy prime minister of the Kyrgyz Republic for social policy, will be responsible for social policy, provision of ideology for the reforms, the health service, culture, education, training of specialists, science, youth, the family and women, tourism and sport, public associations, religious associations, religious confessions, art unions, media and press, and relations with nongovernment organizations.

Amangeldy Muraliyev, deputy prime minister of the Kyrgyz Republic for industrial policy, will be responsible for industrial policy, coordination of the activity of the industrial and fuel and power supply sectors, the working out and implementation of their development, the mining industry, use and protection of mineral resources, construction, standardization and metrology, geology, geodesy, and cartography, and the denationalization and privatization of state property.

Bekbolot Talgarbekov, deputy prime minister of the Kyrgyz Republic for agrarian policy, will be responsible for agrarian policy, the working out and implementation of agrarian and land reforms, development of the agrarian industrial complex, irrigation and water resources, the processing of agricultural products and supplying the people with foodstuffs, consumer cooperation, agricultural construction and protection of nature.

2. Control over state administration bodies is to rest with the Prime minister Apas Dzhumagulov and the deputy prime ministers of the Kyrgyz Republic in accordance with their responsibilities.

3. Resolution No. 176 of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic of 19 May 1995 on the distribution of duties among the members of the presidium of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic is deemed null and void.

[Signed] Apas Dzhumagulov, prime minister.

Georgia

Georgia: Foreign Minister: No Plans To Join 'Integration Alliance'

LD2703162096 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1608 GMT 27 Mar 96

[By Tengiz Pachkoria]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TBILISI, March 27 (Itar-Tass) — Georgia has no plans to join Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in their bid for closer integration of ex-Soviet republics, Georgian Foreign Minister Irakli Menagharashvili said on Wednesday.

"Today Georgia will not consider the question of joining a new integration alliance — the union of Russia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan," Menagharashvili told a news conference.

The minister stressed that this issue was discussed during a Russian-Georgian summit meeting in Moscow on March 18 and 19.

Menagharashvili noted that Georgia's stance was accepted with understanding by the Russian leadership, which did not express any claims to Georgia concerning its position on the alliance.

The minister denied any comments on the plans of Russia and Belarus to sign an agreement on deeper integration.

"I am not going to comment on steps and actions of the leaders of two sovereign countries," he said adding that "the Belarusian people should decide itself which agreements the country should sign and which alliances it should enter".

Georgia: Chechen Party Head Says Pipeline Sabotage To 'Intensify'

AU2803112096 Tbilisi REZONANSI in Georgian 19-20 Mar 96 pp 1, 2

[Interview with Ramzan Goitemirov, leader of the Chechen Greens movement, by REZONANSI correspondent Akaki Gogichaishvili in Tbilisi; date not given: "The Chechen Greens Do Not Want Oil To Be Transported to the West"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Gogichaishvili] How serious a force are the Greens in Chechnya and what are their aims?

[Goitemirov] All forces fighting for Chechnya's freedom support the Greens movement. We are a fairly large and influential force in Chechnya. At the same time, we are united within the Caucasian Ecological Council of which I am the head. Our aim is the integration of the Caucasian people. By Caucasian people, I mean the population of the north Caucasus and the Transcaucasus. In general, we believe that these are artificial concepts that have been introduced to split up a united ethnic group. All Caucasians are related to one another.

[Gogichaishvili] To what extent does your concept of a united Caucasus correspond to Eduard Shevardnadze's initiative concerning a peaceful Caucasus?

[Goitemirov] These two concepts absolutely correspond to one another. For the first time in the last 100 years the executive structures of Caucasian states are taking measures that are aimed at understanding one another properly. We support the initiatives put forward by Shevardnadze and Aliyev [Azeri president].

[Gogichaishvili] As is known, the Shevardnadze initiative envisages ensuring the safety of all types of communications in the region. However, Chechen separatists are threatening to wreck the Russian variant for transporting Azeri oil by blowing up the pipeline. From this point of view, it is difficult to say that the Chechen position corresponds to the Shevardnadze initiative....

[Goitemirov] The extraction and transportation of oil in the region should be carried out with the agreement of the people, otherwise they will resort to violent methods and, according to my calculations, it will cost the authorities four to five times more to ensure the safety of the pipeline than to implement the "project of the century." In recent times, the pipeline in the north Caucasus has been blown up seven times. From the very beginning, the Caucasian national-liberation movement warned everyone about this. This trend will continue and intensify throughout the entire Caucasus. We are demanding that Caucasian interests be strengthened in the Caucasus when the East, West, and Russia need the Caucasus without the Caucasians. Our people will not allow this.

[Gogichaishvili] Will the indignation of the Caucasian people affect the safety of the Georgian route?

[Goitemirov] If the West does not take measures that take into account the interests of the Caucasian people, the transit of oil should end in Georgia and it should not be transported beyond its borders. In my view, it would be interesting to restore the old Groznyy-Batumi pipeline and use it to supply oil to our neighbors, for example, from Groznyy to Georgia. A single power complex in the Caucasus envisages, first and foremost, satisfying the demands of the entire region using its resources and only thereafter trading with other countries.

Georgia: Abkhazian Ports Closed; Sukhumi Threatens Referendum

LD2803110596 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0940 GMT 28 Mar 96

[By Tengiz Pachkoria]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TBILISI March 28 (Itar-Tass) — The conflict between Georgia and separatist Abkhazia flared up this week as Tbilisi ordered all Abkhazia-bound foreign ships to get a Georgian permission for sailing there, while Sukhumi threatened to withdraw from talks with Tbilisi and to hold a referendum on quitting Georgia and turning to Russia.

"All foreign ships, including the Turkish ones, have the right to visit Abkhazian ports only upon a permission of the government of Georgia," Georgian Foreign minister Irakliy Menagarishvili told reporters on Thursday upon returning from a three-day trip to Turkey.

He added that the Turkish authorities had informed all their transport companies that Abkhazian ports were closed for ships according to the decree of the President of Georgia.

Abkhazia-bound ships have now to pass border and customs formalities in the Georgian port of Poti and only then can be allowed to sail to Abkhazia.

Abkhazia leader Vladislav Ardzinba reacted sharply to the Georgian decision and warned Tbilisi on Thursday that he would quit all talks and call a referendum to decide whether Abkhazia should be with Georgia or with Russia if Tbilisi continued the blockade of his region.

Ardzinba said in a statement received by Tass that "no unlawful and power measures would help solve the conflict between Abkhazia and Georgia, would not make our people kneel."

"We shall struggle for our rights," he said.

Ardzinba warned Tbilisi that, in case it does not change its current policy towards the region, Abkhazia would hold a referendum "on the issue with who the people of Abkhazia want to maintain relations — with Georgia or Russia." He also threatened to withdraw from any talks on a political settlement with Tbilisi until the results of the referendum are known.

In the meantime, Georgian journalists rumoured that the recent numerous trips of Tbilisi officials to Turkey and vice versa could be a sign that Georgia was reorienting its policy from Moscow to Ankara.

But Menagarishvili rejected the claims. "The frequency of the meetings between the Georgian and Turkish leaders does not absolutely mean any reorientation of the foreign policy of Georgia, it has a balanced character," he said.

The Georgian decision to close Abkhazian ports for foreign vessels followed a resolution of a CIS summit which imposed a blockade on Abkhazia. However Tbilisi said the separatist region continued to get supplies via the Black sea.

The Georgian decision has nearly triggered a bloodshed between Abkhazians and Russian border guards in Sukhumi last week. The border guards opened warning fire to keep foreign vessels away from Sukhumi as they had not been cleared in Poti.

Abkhazians then opened warning fire at the border guards. There were no casualty reports.

Georgia: Abkhaz Official Says Russian Military Smuggling Arms

LD2703183796 Tbilisi CONTACT INFORMATION AGENCY in Georgian 1640 GMT 27 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Sukhumi — The Russian border guards are smuggling ammunition and the special purpose equipment, Valeri Arshba, one of the high-ranking officials in the separatist Abkhaz government, has said. In his words, on 26 March, two small landing ships smuggled a considerable amount of cargo from the Ochamchire military base. The ships sailed in the direction of Novorosiysk. In the meantime, according to Arshba, border units had smuggled ammunition in cars from the Pitsunda and Gagra checkpoints to Sukhumi. A big Black Sea Fleet landing ship, currently in neutral waters near the town, will be used for shipping a part of the Russian border troops' property to Sukhumi.

Arshba ruled out the possibility of a complete pull-out of the Russian border guards from Abkhazia.

An information source of the Sukhumi border regiment has confirmed the instance of a part-muggling of the border guards' property and ammunition to Sukhumi. The same source said that these actions are of preventive nature, taken in connection with the recent exacerbation of relations between the Russian border guards and the Abkhaz leadership.

Georgia: Official Outlines Proposals, Stance on Abkhazia

AU2703191096 Tbilisi REZONANSI in Georgian 12-13 Mar 96 pp 1, 2

[Interview with Tamaz Nadareishvili, chairman of the Abkhazian Autonomous Republic Supreme Council, by

Giorgi Kalandadze in Tbilisi; date not given: "Ardzinba and His Band Should Be Declared State Criminals"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On 14-15 March, the Georgian Parliament will discuss facts of the genocide and ethnic cleansing of the Georgian population during the Abkhazian conflict [this discussion was postponed to a later date]. Tamaz Nadareishvili, chairman of the Abkhazian Autonomous Republic Supreme Council, will deliver a report. In a conversation with a REZONANSI correspondent, he stated the following concerning this question:

[Nadareishvili] The previous Georgian Parliament discussed the Abkhazian question on more than one occasion but, unfortunately, it did nothing more than raise emotions and exacerbate the situation. Today, there is no document that reflects realistic ways of resolving the Abkhazian question and that gives an assessment of events that have already taken place. Therefore, we believe that Parliament should finally adopt some kind of document so that our work does not get bogged down in idle talk and personal relations. Parliament should, first and foremost, assess what occurred in Abkhazia. This was genocide and ethnic cleansing. Consequently, a document confirming this should be drawn up in Georgia's official structures. Taking into account that Parliament is the supreme legislative body, this will be a document that corresponds to this level. It will be sent to international organizations. Proceeding from this, the question arises: What should we do with those who have carried out genocide? Therefore, we are raising the question of the issuing of arrest warrants. We have a mass of evidence in the Procurator's Office that genocide did indeed take place. We have a list of 20 to 25 names. These are high-ranking representatives of the so-called Republic of Abkhazia for who arrest warrants should be issued. In my view, the adoption of such a decision is more important for us. First and foremost, Ardzinba and his band will be declared state criminals. Believe me, Ardzinba will not be able to set foot outside Gudauta or travel freely to Moscow. The third question concerns the peacekeeping forces, about whom we have repeatedly stated our position. We can prove that they are favorably disposed toward the Abkhazians. We can present numerous facts that ethnic cleansing has been continuing on the territory under their control. The participation of the military in various dirty dealings has also been recorded. We have arrived at the conclusion that their mandate is unacceptable to us. We are raising the question of the total withdrawal of the peacekeeping forces.

[Kalandadze] You have stated that representatives of the Russian peacekeeping forces are connected with criminal circles in Abkhazia. Will you present evidence of this at the session of Parliament?

[Nadareishvili] We have a long list of such facts. We cannot submit everything before Parliament. However, we will give 5 to 10 examples. We have sent a full list of these crimes to the Ministry of Defense and directly to Yakushev, commander of the peacekeeping forces.

[Kalandadze] Have you received a reply from them?

[Nadareishvili] There has been no official response. However, we know Yakushev's reaction: No matter how much fuss Nadareishvili creates and no matter what decision is adopted at whatever level, we will never leave.

[Kalandadze] It is known that a plan for the deployment of the peacekeeping forces is being drawn up. What is your position regarding this?

[Nadareishvili] I know that those proposals that have been submitted by the Georgian side concerning a new mandate have proved unacceptable to the Russian side. Experts sent from the Russian ministries of foreign affairs and defense have come to the conclusion that the adoption of such a mandate is impossible as it will not meet with the agreement of the Abkhazian side. According to our variant, the peacekeeping forces should have been transferred from the Enguri River to the Ghalidzga River and we should have started to reclaim Gali Rayon. The restoration of Georgian jurisdiction should precede the return of the population. The next stage should be their transfer from the Ghalidzga to deep into the interior. The same thing should be done from the Psou River as well. Therefore, if the world and Russia recognize our territorial integrity, no one should be surprised that subunits from the ministries of defense and internal affairs will move in there. We find incomprehensible the position of those experts who state that only official Abkhazian structures should be there. In our view, there are Abkhazian bands and formations there. Any unit that today is not attached to the Georgian Ministries of Internal Affairs and Defense is illegal. We made them write into the mandate that the peacekeeping forces should disarm all illegal formations.

[Kalandadze] There is a negative attitude among the refugees toward the peace course taken by the authorities. Boris Kakubava [head of the Union for the Liberation of Abkhazia] has called upon Abkhazia's supreme bodies to abolish themselves. How serious is this mood among the population?

[Nadareishvili] The Abkhazian Supreme Council is the sole legitimate body. It has not been appointed by anyone or formed in Tbilisi. It is that body that was elected on the basis of universal elections in Abkhazia

in 1991. Today, it represents more than a half of the Abkhazian population. The Supreme Council's term of office expires in October. Therefore, it is superfluous to speak about self-abolition. It is still undecided how things will be later. It is possible that the higher body — the Georgian Parliament — will extend its powers. It is my hope that we will be on Abkhazian territory by then and we will be able to hold new elections there.

[Kalandadze] Eduard Shevardnadze has proposed the idea of a common Caucasian home. How do you view this and when can this be implemented?

[Nadareishvili] The idea itself is to be welcomed. A peaceful, stable, and united Caucasus is one of the guarantees of our security. Until Georgia's territorial integrity is finally restored, peace for us is a fantasy.

[Kalandadze] How do you view cooperation with the north Caucasian republics that are participating in the Abkhazian conflict within the framework of this idea?

[Nadareishvili] Many north Caucasians fought in Abkhazia. We did not go to Chechnya or Adygea. They came here and insulted our homeland. It is difficult for me today to have a friendly attitude toward Chechens. Everyone should repent for what they have done. I likewise cannot imagine that Georgians and Abkhazians can live together today or tomorrow. This will take generations and years. It is superfluous to speak about this today.

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